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VIA CRUCIS

VEN. FATHERS OF THE

PROVINCE OF CALIFORNIA







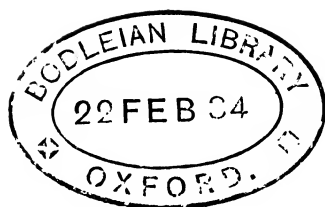
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VIA CRUCIS;
OR,
MEDITATIONS FOR PASSION AND
EASTER TIDE.

BY
THE AUTHOR OF "BIBLE PARTINGS," ETC.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRACT COMMITTEE.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND
HARVEY, LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE,
THIS BOOK IS OFFERED
AS A LITTLE TOKEN OF AFFECTIONATE RESPECT
TO
A JUSTLY HONOURED DIOCESAN,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

ONE word of explanation may be given on what may otherwise seem the fragmentary character of the Meditations for Holy Week itself. Many important and interesting subjects for thought then have been omitted, as already better treated of in existing devotional books for that season; to which the portion referred to of this little work is only offered as supplemental.

PREFACE.

BY THE LORD BISHOP OF CARLISLE.

IT is with great pleasure that I perform the duty, which has been imposed upon me, of writing a few prefatory sentences by way of introduction to the following Meditations. Nothing but the modesty of the Author can be pleaded in favour of the opinion that any such introduction by another person is necessary: but I feel sure that if the plan which the Author has thought fit to adopt should be the means of bringing the little book under the notice of some who would otherwise have passed it by, my trifling contribution will have served a good purpose.

The design of the Author has been to fill a blank which seems to be left by popular Meditations for the Holy Week and Easter by supplying introductory Meditations for the fifth week in Lent, and extending the Meditations to the whole Octave of Easter. It was perhaps a wisdom, not now apparently generally appreciated, which led the Church in former days to describe by the name of Passion week not that immediately preceding Easter day, which is now not unfrequently so-called, but that which ushers in the great week properly designated by the higher appellation of Holy. Speaking of the fifth Sunday in Lent, Bishop Sparrow says, "This is called Passion Sunday; for now begins the commemoration of the Passion of our Lord. The

Epistle treats of the Passion; the Gospel of our Lord's being slandered by the bold malice of the Jews, who call Him Samaritan, and tell Him He hath a devil, which must needs be a part of His Passion." Might it not be more satisfactory to say that the Holy week is not entirely a week of the Passion: it is the week of the Triumphal Entry, and of the Rest in the Tomb, quite as much as of the Passion itself: and might it not be thought desirable therefore, in anticipation of the week which is to be wholly given up to the consideration of the historical events which ushered in and succeeded the supreme event of Good Friday, to devote a week to the contemplation of the doctrinal aspects of the Passion of the Lord? This view seems in any case to furnish an apology, if apology be needed, for joining Meditations for Passion week with those for the two greater weeks which follow.

No apology can be necessary for extending the Easter Meditations to the limit of the Octave. Thoughts connected with Easter are not soon exhausted. .

These remarks appear to be a sufficient fulfilment of the promise made by me to the Author of Meditations for Passion, Holy, and Easter weeks. Experience alone can show how far they will answer their purpose; but I trust that many will make the experiment, and find themselves rewarded in doing so.

H. CARLISLE.

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MEDITATIONS

FOR

PASSION AND EASTER TIDE.



Fifth Sunday in Lent.

THE TYPE OF THE BURNING BUSH.

“And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight.”—*Exodus* iii. 3 (First Morning Lesson).

LIKE MOSES, I too would draw near to see a great sight, on rightly beholding which depends my profiting by the holy season on which we now enter: the Bush burning with fire, but not consumed, or, in other words, the mystery of the Incarnation. The bush which Moses looked at was the true product of the soil on which it grew. Although an unearthly glory encompassed it, it had a root, a stem, and branches like other shrubs. The sandy soil of the desert had nourished it; the dews and rains of heaven had made it flourish; the hot glowing sunshine had forced forward the opening of its leaves. Even so Thou, O my Saviour, wast born as we are of woman, with a true human body and soul; Thou couldst feel hunger and thirst, weariness and pain; Thine eyes could shed tears, Thy heart be rent by sorrow. Thou didst “grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground;” Thou

didst take upon Thee "the form of a servant," and wast "in all things made like unto Thy brethren;" yea, though sinless, Thou didst "humble Thyself" and submit to come among us "in the likeness of sinful flesh." But yet in that fleshly shrine there resided the divine brightness, "the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father;" for in this Thy human nature there dwelt, and dwelleth for evermore, "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The "flame of fire" from on high of Thy divinity encompasses "the bush" of Thy manhood; the glory of infinite holiness, purity and love surrounds that lowly head; my Maker looks out on me from those kind and pitying eyes; the hand stretched forth to aid me is the hand that created me.

And the bush round which that unearthly light shines, on which glows that awful fire in its unspeakable splendour, is nevertheless not consumed. The divine and human natures are not confused, are not mingled together; each remains perfect,—only the manhood has been taken into God. Mystery of mysteries! announced by the angel Gabriel to the lowly Virgin; proclaimed to shepherds by the joyful choirs of heaven; and contemplated with wondering delight by the beloved Apostle who saw "that eternal life which was with the Father," and with his own "hands handled the Word" "made flesh." And I too am bidden to behold it; to draw near like Moses of old, and gaze upon it with the eyes of the mind, as disclosed to me in the pages of the Bible, or set forth to me on the Lord's Table;

to survey the sacred humanity wrapped, as it were, in the fire of the divinity and yet uninjured; and so to see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." As I look, I ask, Why was this miracle of miracles worked? why was He "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting," "manifest in the flesh"? and I tremble at my own question, while a warning voice seems to say, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Ah! who am I that I should see things which "the angels desire to look into"? Is not this a sight, so great, so awful, so dazzling to human eyes, that it is best for sinners, leaving it to be "seen of angels" only, to cover their faces ashamed and abashed before it?

And yet, when, terrified by the remembrance of my own ingratitude and disobedience, I do as did Moses, who "hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God," the voice again calls me. He Who spake to Moses from the midst of the flame of fire, seems to say to me: "'I am come down to deliver' thee: to save thee from sin and from eternal death I became Man; this great miracle was wrought for thy salvation. Learn by its greatness how much I love thee: learn by that same greatness how hard a thing it is to save a sinner. I am the God of Abraham, his 'shield and exceeding great reward,' come to fulfil My promise to him that in his 'seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed;' but to accomplish this promise I must Myself be 'made a curse.' I am the God of Isaac, come to perform

all that his mysterious offering signified ; but ere like him I can come down alive from the altar of sacrifice, My brows must be encircled with thorns, and I must toil up the hill beneath the burden of the wood on which I am about to suffer. I am the God of Jacob, to whom I showed the mystic ladder, and with whom I wrestled in his hour of trouble ; but with a greater conflict than his, yea, with agony revealed by a bloody sweat, must I strive in prayer before 'as a prince I can prevail' for the eternal deliverance of My children: nor can I place any ladder for the fallen sons of men, which shall be upon the earth and yet 'the top of it reach to heaven,' except that cross on which I am going to die.

"By My servant Moses I brought Israel out of Egypt 'with a mighty hand and with a strong arm,' plague after plague revealed My power, and the Red Sea swallowed up Pharaoh and his host ; but not so could I free thee from the dominion of thy cruel ruler, Satan, from this evil world, from the death that was thy due. Not by smiting, but by suffering, must I deliver thee ; the Red Sea that is to drown thine enemies, thy sins, letting thee go through safely, is the sea of Mine own Blood ; I win for thee thy heavenly Canaan through My own death.

"And all this I do, not for thee only, but for all the generations of men. I am 'the God not of the dead, but of the living ; for all live unto Me:' My saints who walked with Me in the dim twilight of the years before the flood, the patriarchs, the prophets, rest in paradise, and shall appear hereafter in

glory, because of this 'decease' that I am come to 'accomplish at Jerusalem.' 'I am come down to deliver' thee and all mankind."

What sayest thou, O my soul! to these things? How art thou receiving these dear-bought gifts? Is this "God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob" in truth thy God? and hast thou everlasting life through Him? Or hast thou turned back from Him to slavery, to the service of the world, of thine own sinful desires, and therefore of Satan, notwithstanding that the Lord has Himself interfered for thy rescue? Search and try thyself; "and that not lightly, nor as a dissembler with God, but so" as to find out the truth. If thou art still "tied and bound with the chain of thy sins," remember that the Everlasting One suffered Himself to be bound for thee, and ask Him at once to set thee free. If thou art still the slave of this world, desiring with a supreme desire its good, dreading with a supreme fear its ill, disappointed with its wages yet unable to forsake its service, hear Him Who says: "I know thy sorrows. Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Dost thou hesitate to take His easy yoke and light burden upon thee? Then hear Him speak again: "Before Abraham was I am," the changeless stay of souls: all other things save Me once were not, how then shall they give effectual support to an immortal spirit? O thou who now art writing with a trembling hand the title-page of that great book which, a story without an end, thou art to go on reading

through eternity,—to be to thee either a scroll of “lamentation, mourning, and woe,” or a grand poem, a joyful “Psalm for the” endless “sabbath,”—be wise in time. Of My wisdom there is no end: acquaint thyself then with Me, and in My light thou shalt see light, and I shall feed thee and lead thee beside the living waters which can alone quench thy soul’s thirst for knowledge. I am changeless in love: learn to love Me now, in order that thy affections may have a lasting and satisfying object in the long day of eternity. I am infinite in holiness: draw near to that Blood which can “purge thy conscience from dead works to serve the living God”¹ here and now; that so thou mayest one day serve Him where His servants “shall see His Face, and His name shall be on their foreheads.”

O Christ, Who not with silver or gold hast redeemed me from my “vain conversation,” my life without God, but with Thine infinitely precious Blood, suffer me not to reject Thy dear-bought gifts; break my chains; set me free in spite of myself. Or rather,—since Thou savest us in truth without our own aid, but not against our will,—incline mine, Lord, by the mighty influences of Thy grace to accept Thy most gracious offer. Thou knowest what is in man; his unstableness, his unbelief, his villainess, are not hid from Thee; and yet for man Thou didst become incarnate, that for man Thou mightest taste death:—

¹ See the Epistle for the day.

“Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus;
Tantus labor non sit cassus.”

Lord, give Thyself to me; or rather, help mine unbelief, and make me to see that Thou hast already done so, and dispose me to accept what Thou hast so freely bestowed.

THE PRAYER.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, pour Thy grace into our hearts; that as we have known the Incarnation of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel, so by His Cross and Passion we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Fifth Pondap in Lent.

CHRIST FORETELLING HIS PASSION.

“Then He took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.”—*S. Luke* xviii. 31.

I find it written by three out of the four Evangelists how my Lord on His last journey announced His approaching sufferings and death. “He took the twelve disciples apart in the way” to Jerusalem in order to tell them something; and what He told “amazed them, and as they followed they were afraid.” Well they might be, for Christ’s words are

these: "The Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge, and to crucify Him." The journey to Jerusalem was in itself no new thing to the apostles; they looked forward to it as to the treading of a well-known road, the meeting with familiar faces, and the sharing in holy rites with which they were well acquainted. Their amazement is caused by Christ raising His hand and pointing to a strange object that stands at the end of their oft-trodden path; for that object is a cross. Thoughts of ambition, desires to see their Master exalted to a temporal kingdom, are busy in their minds: He knows it and applies the remedy. "This journey which we are taking," He would tell them, "is not to end in this world's honour, but in its shame; not in its ease and pleasure, but in its sharpest pain: the way going up to Jerusalem is for Me the way of death."

Nor does this warning reach them for the first time. Thrice already had Christ spoken to them of His betrayal, His sufferings, and His resurrection: once just after S. Peter had acknowledged Him to be "the Son of the living God," once on the Mount of the Transfiguration, and then again afterwards, "while they abode in Galilee." But each time it had been to little purpose. All was so contrary to their preconceived notions, so utterly different from what they expected, that the Master's words had fallen on their ears without finding a real lodging in

their thoughts. At first we are told that they "questioned one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." The next time S. Peter's "Be it far from Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee," drew down Christ's severe rebuke. And on a third occasion we read concerning a plain definite statement of the coming passion, that "They understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask" for an explanation. Not surely that in itself the saying was hard to understand, but that it was one which so contradicted what they thought they had learned from the Scriptures, and went so against all their hopes and wishes, that they could not bear to think that its apparent was its real meaning; and so, as Christ's people have often done since, they made up their minds that His words must not be taken literally, while a lurking dread lest they should be compelled to do so made them fear to ask Him to explain them. But now for the fourth time the Master speaks. The things about to happen at Jerusalem are, he tells them, in fulfilment of God's eternal purpose, declared by the prophets. The Son of Man is to "be delivered unto the Gentiles," as Joseph was by his envious brethren, as Samson when bound by his own countrymen and given over into heathen hands. He is to be "mocked, spitefully entreated, spitted on, scourged, and put to death," so accomplishing His own word by Isaiah, "I gave My back to the smiters, I hid not My face from shame and spitting," "He is cut off out of the land of the living," "He hath poured out His soul unto death."

But at the end of the long gloomy avenue up which these words bid them look, there shines a light from heaven: "The third day He shall rise again." Jonah's mysterious type is yet to find its antitype. Hosea's mystic words, "After two days will He revive us, in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight," are yet to be fulfilled. The manifold predictions of the prophets concerning the glory and endless reign of the Messiah are to be "accomplished," as well as their sayings about His sufferings. Such is the purport of Christ's declaration. But, distinct as it is, the disciples' pre-occupied minds fail to comprehend it. It amazes them indeed, it fills their minds with an indefinite sense of terror, so that "as they follow they are afraid;" but the words seem too dreadful to be believed, they take refuge in the hope that they may be fulfilled in some other way than the one which they seem to point out; and so, as S. Luke tells us, "This saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."

Now ask thyself, my soul, is it with thee as it was with them? Year after year hast thou been invited to accompany thy Master in His last sad journey; and now once more He, in His great goodness, says to thee, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem," and bids thee contemplate again those mysteries of divine love which were there accomplished. But how dost thou respond to His invitation? Hast thou clearer views than of old of the cause of His sufferings? What dost thou know of the evil of sin which demanded such a sacrifice?

What of the love of God which provided it? Canst thou say as S. Thomas said once, "Let us also go that we may die with Him,"—die because of His death to selfishness, to pride, to insincerity, to every kind of sin? Is it thus with thee; or are worldliness and ungodliness so clouding thy vision that the "saying is hid from thee" which tells how Christ loved His Church to, through, and beyond death, and the purpose of His self-sacrifice? Didst thou know these things better once, and are they now seen by thee more dimly than of old? "Is it nothing to thee," at least in some moods, to behold Christ's sorrow, like to which is none other, and which He endured for thee? Ah! if so, on this journey—possibly thy last to Jerusalem on this solemn errand—fall at His feet, and say, "Lord, I beseech Thee by Thy willing obedience unto death for my sake, have mercy upon me. Teach me what sin is, and what Thou art. Enable me to follow Thee in spirit through this holy season, learning of Thee how to die to sin and live to righteousness; and let the lesson abide with me through the rest of my days till Thou at last shalt call me to follow Thee to the Jerusalem that is above."

But now that I have seen my own image in the disciples' slowness to learn the lesson of the Cross, let me look again at its great Teacher, the calm Leader of that anxious band of travellers. While the minds of His followers are disturbed by so many uncertainties, to His spirit there is neither perplexity nor doubt. They are dismayed by the ghastly object

at their journey's end, indistinctly as they see it : He sees it exactly as it is in its true size and proportions, sees the hideous things that cluster round it, human envy, malice and cruelty, and the yet darker shapes in the background, the evil spirits that are setting those bad passions at work for His destruction ; and yet He advances with a steady step. Show any other of the sons of men such a spectre in his path and he starts back from the encounter. Christ sees it in His road, and what is His determination ? " We flee to the desert ? we depart to the dispersed among the Gentiles ? " No. " Behold we go up to Jerusalem."

Does any one—bolder than were the disciples—enquire of Him, " Lord, Thou didst bid Thy disciples if persecuted in one city to flee to another, why then, disregarding Thine own precept, dost Thou tread this perilous way ? " The answer is this : " If I am not ' delivered to the Gentiles ' what Samson will arise to destroy those Philistines, thy sins ? if I refuse to be sold like Joseph, who shall give the Bread of Life to thy hungry soul ? If I hide My face from the shame which awaits it in the house of Caiaphas and the prætorium of Pilate, how wilt thou be able to lift up thy face before My judgment-seat in the great day ? Unless I suffer the scourging, by whose stripes shall thy wounds be healed ? If My soul is not ' poured out unto death,' how shalt thou escape death everlasting ? It is the love which I, Thy Creator, bear to the work of Mine own hands, which draws Me on. It is the love where-

with I love thee—thee who hast preferred perishable things to My love, yea, who hast ‘forgotten Me days without number’—which straitens Me till My baptism of suffering is accomplished, and makes Me readier to wear the crown of thorns than was Solomon for his crown of gold.

“Learn hence thy danger. I am One with the Father; and yet even My infinite wisdom can find no other way for thy deliverance. Learn hence My love for all mankind and for thee. I give Myself to death that I may give thee Myself for an everlasting portion. What is thy heart’s answer to this love?”

THE PRAYER.

Almighty and most merciful God, grant to us Thine unworthy servants, that as Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem that He might there die for us, so we by Thy grace may so follow Him now, that hereafter we may dwell with Him in the Jerusalem that is above; for His sake. Amen.

Fifth Tuesday in Lent.

THE REQUEST OF SS. JAMES AND JOHN.

“Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee’s children, with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him.”—*S. Matt. xx. 20.*

Let me meditate to-day on the petition of Salome and her sons. How natural the scene is¹ and yet,

how disappointing! How entirely do they act as most of us would have done in the like case! And, by so doing, how plainly they show that they have wasted many opportunities of learning the real nature of their Master's kingdom, just as we often waste opportunities of spiritual improvement; and that His late warnings have fallen vainly on their ears, as His warnings too often fall on ours! Looking a little more closely, the first thing that strikes me is the fact here exemplified that even good people may make great mistakes in what they pray for. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought," says S. Paul, and accordingly here I find Christ saying to two of His dearest disciples and to their holy mother, "Ye know not what ye ask." "Her dreams were of the glory, for the Cross she could not see¹."

Salome beholds a kingly diadem where the crown of thorns is about to be set, a royal throne instead of the accursed tree, and so she ignorantly begs for her two dear sons the place which within a fortnight she is to see occupied by the two robbers, crucified "one on the right hand, and the other on the left" of Christ. How thankful she must have then felt that her petition had been refused!

And we are not wiser than she was in our prayers. We pray for some alteration in our outward circumstances; and God perhaps knows that the change if effected would bring us misery. We ask to have

¹ Lifting up to the Cross—*Lyra Innocentium*.

some trial removed ; whereas He knows that it is that very trouble that is keeping us near to Him. Or else we pray for some good thing ; and God knows that, though in itself good, it would prove a curse to us. Christ chose wisely for SS. James and John ; let me trust Him to choose as wisely for me ; and when “in everything by prayer and supplication” I have made “my requests known unto God,” let me rely on a Father’s love to grant or refuse them as shall be really best for me. Even a heathen advised suppliants to pray in such a spirit, saying that “the gods love us better than we love ourselves.” How much more should we, who know God as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” entrust our petitions with perfect confidence to His infinite love and wisdom. The promise “Ask and ye *shall* have” does not bind God to give us what will harm us. We ask with a view to our own good, but we often mistake the means ; and that promise is fulfilled when He, Who sees all things clearly, gives us the end we have in view—our happiness—although in a way we looked not for. No sincere prayer offered through Christ is lost ; only God chooses the right time and way in which to grant it.

It is thus that I find my Saviour acting now. He prepares to give the thing asked for in a higher sense than the present intention of the petitioners ; in a way that will not hurt but greatly profit them. The right element in the two apostles’ request was the wish to be ever near Him ; and he proceeds to show them the way in which their

desire can be accomplished. But His question is a searching one: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" to partake of the bitter sorrow that I am about to endure? to be overwhelmed along with Me by the dark waters of death? You have followed Me while I preached and worked miracles before the admiring multitude, can you share My solitude, forsaken by all men and even by My Father's sensible presence? You "have continued with Me in My temptations," nor left Me when others took offence at My teaching and "walked no more with" Me, can you bear to be yourselves cast out and killed for My name's sake?

"We can," is the answer. In so answering SS. James and John miscalculate their present strength. Scarcely ten days later, in the awful vigil of Gethsemane, far from drinking of Christ's cup by watchful and prayerful sympathy, they will sleep when He bids them wake, add to His sorrows by disregarding His repeated calls, and hear the reproach, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" Of them, as of their companions, it will be written that when Christ's foes seized, bound, and led Him away, "they all forsook Him and fled." But of these things, though foreseen by Him with sorrow, our blessed Lord says nothing now. Rather He looks instead in His pitying kindness beyond present weakness to future strength; past James and John as He sees them now, loving Him indeed with strong human affection, but relying too much on its power,—“the

spirit willing but the flesh weak"—to behold the same two men as they shall be after they have handled their risen Lord, seen Him ascend to heaven, and received the Holy Ghost. Of that better time Christ says to them, "Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." Mysterious words then to Salome and her sons; but when time explained them,

"O well for that fond mother, well for her beloved that they,
When th' hour His secret meaning told, did by their promise
stay."

Then stripes and imprisonment were borne by both apostles, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name." Then

"He who of the chosen twelve first trode the martyrs' way,"

S. James, went forth willingly to meet the executioner's sword. Then

"For the highly-favoured one who on Christ's bosom lay,"

persecution, sufferings, and the long lonely exile in Patmos, proved not too much to endure for the sake of Christ.

Yet even in this better time the Lord tells them that it would rest with themselves so to use these great opportunities, that they might be found at the Last Day so conformed to His image that none could be nearer to Him than they. Such seems the import of His words, "To sit on My right hand and

on My left hand is not Mine to give," as men give by partial favour; but, according to real fitness and capacity, "to them for whom it is prepared of My Father," Who will place the true Joseph's brethren, "the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth," but each where it is best and happiest for him to be.

And now, does my Redeemer, at this solemn season, ask me a question like that which He put to these two Apostles? Is He saying to us all, "Are ye able? My followers, baptized in your infancy into My death, professing now trust in that death for the remission of sins and a desire to be conformed to it by dying unto sin daily, is this profession of yours a sincere one? 'Are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with,' even in this plainest and most needful sense, that, as I shrank from no pain in order to abolish the guilt of your sin, so you spare no effort to get, helped by Me, deliverance from its power?" Alas! what is the answer? "We are able?" Is it not rather, "Forgive me, Lord; the sense of Thy dying love has not been strong enough in my heart to make me strive continually to die to the evil within me. Cast me not away, as Thou justly mightest, from Thy presence; take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Without Thee, I now see plainly, I can do nothing. Make me able." If I make this request heartily, Christ will grant it; and then I must expect that its fulfilment will carry with it a baptism of suffering. By inward or outward anguish, by spiritual conflict, by bereave-

ment or sickness, Christ delivers His people from "this evil world" and leads them through the deep to the promised land. The mind naturally shrinks from such cold dark waves; but oh! my soul, remember Who has said, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee," and consider whether thou wilt not fare better with Him amidst them, than on the dry land without Him. For so only canst thou look forward with hope to the last baptism of all; to the day when, lost to man's sight under the waves of death, thou shalt pass through them safely to the other side, into the rest which "remaineth to the people of God."

Let me also consider my answer to the other question, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" In one Holy Communion after another, I have found Christ's cup of bitterness a "cup of blessing" to my soul. Has that high privilege had its right effect on me? Have I duly remembered the Apostle's words, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils," and put far from me the cup filled with pride, anger, or falsehood? Has the remembrance of the cup, which Christ drank with tears and bloodshedding that He might hand to me "the cup of salvation," prevailed with my soul to present itself hourly to God, to be restored by Him to righteousness after the terms of the New Covenant in Christ's blood? Have I been able even in this sense to drink of the cup in which my Lord has pledged me? What shall I say? Only this: "Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great

mercy; according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine offences. Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." So only shall I become able to drink of Christ's cup in the other sense, by suffering cheerfully for Him and with Him whensoever He shall call me to do so. For, if I am truly His, He will stand by me in the hour of conflict, He will give me the spirit of a son; He will say in me and by me at the approach of anguish or death, "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done."

O Son of Man, Who camest to give Thy life a ransom for many, we are too apt to view Thy benefits as external things; and to forget that they must be received within us if they are to be truly our own. Make us willing to enter into "the fellowship of Thy sufferings," to endure anything whereby we can be brought, and kept, close to Thee.

THE PRAYER.

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Have mercy upon us.

O God, our Saviour and Redeemer,
Have mercy upon us.

O God, our Sanctifier and Comforter,
Have mercy upon us.

O Holy Trinity, One God,
Have mercy upon us.

From pride and ambition, from vain confidence

and ignorance of our own hearts, from unwatchfulness and neglect of prayer,

Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thy Blood our souls' ransom-price, by Thy baptism of suffering, and by the Cup of grief unspeakable which Thou didst drain for our sake,

Good Lord, deliver us.

In the hour of trial, in pain and weakness, and in our passage through death,

Good Lord, deliver us.

That Thou wouldest grant us faith unwavering and willingness to be conformed to Thy likeness, making us able to watch with Thee and to suffer for Thy sake,

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That we may walk by faith here and see Thy Face with great joy in Thine eternal kingdom,

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, &c.

Sixth Wednesday in Lent.

THE CURE OF BARTIMÆUS.

"He cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."—*S. Mark x. 48.*

Who can fail to delight in the story of the Saviour, on His way to die, pausing at the gate of Jericho

to give a blind man sight? "The son of Timæus sat by the highway side, begging," when he heard voices, footsteps, and all the signs of a crowd drawing nigh. "What is it?" he asked of the first who halted near him. "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," was the answer. Now this blind man had often heard of Him and wished for a cure at His hand. Perhaps he had sometimes thought what moving appeals he would make to Him, if only He had this kind Helper of the helpless near enough to plead his own cause with Him. But now, quite suddenly, the time of action has arrived. There is no time to arrange well-turned sentences; if anything is to be done it must be done quickly. For the great Prophet is not alone, but surrounded by a large company; so that it may be hard to gain His ear at all. And He is not standing still, or even loitering, but walking past. So Bartimæus does not hesitate; does not think, "I will wait for more leisure and a better opportunity some other day." The hope of recovered sight is too precious to be so trifled with. A cry goes pealing through the air; a suppliant voice is heard in shrill, sharp tones of anxiety: "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." The call may have interrupted some wise and holy discourse of our Lord's; or some profound meditation the silence of which all present were respecting. For the disturbance seems to have been felt by them as peculiarly ill-timed. "Many charged him that he should hold his peace." "What,"—so we may interpret their thoughts,—“a blind beggar speak, where we, persons

of far more importance than he, dare not utter; interfere by his unseasonable outcry with our King's deep thoughts on His way to receive His kingdom? We cannot permit such a thing."

There seemed some reason in this; but the sentence which these men were pronouncing was a hard one—a harder one than they knew,—it was one of condemnation to perpetual blindness. Christ was never going to travel that way again. The opportunity which they wished Bartimæus to lose was his last one. As if some instinct told him so, he utterly refused to be guided by their advice, and redoubled his efforts to make himself heard; "he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." What will the Master say to this? He Who has on His mind a burden so little suspected by His followers,—He Who walks towards Jerusalem seeing as in a glass the terrible things that await Him there,—will He for once think of Himself? which will He say are right, the zealous friends who seek to guard His quiet from being broken in on, or the beggar who is rending the air by his outcries? Ah! we well know which. The Son of David has been called on, and of Him it was long ago foretold, "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper." "Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called." Then his reprovers change their tone to words of encouragement: "Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and

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said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto Him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."

Now in Bartimæus, as Christ found him, I see my own likeness; for is not every child of Adam by nature blind and a beggar? As beggars we sit by the world's great highway; along which come and go without tarrying the days and months and years. We stretch out our hands and receive their gifts as they pass by, their flowers and fruits, yea many a precious thing; but like beggars we go on asking for more, for no gift brings us complete happiness. And are we not also blind? Which of us sees sin in its real loathsomeness, well as we may be able to discourse of it? Do we shrink with horror from its most distant approach, as we should if indeed we saw? And, if we have no eyes with which to see the vilest of all vile things as it really is, have we any with which we can see our true Good, and behold God in His works and in His word? "The natural man," we read, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; they are foolishness unto Him." But to me, sitting in my poverty and darkness by the side of this frequented road, there come, ever and anon, footsteps and voices different from those to which I am accustomed. Suppose, for instance, that I have been careless throughout this Lent, yet the approach of Holy Week rouses my attention in some degree.

I ask, what is this unwonted stir? what those great days which will soon be here mean to me? and I receive the same answer that Bartimæus did, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by;" the solemn commemoration of His Death and Resurrection is nigh at hand.

What shall I do? Shall I wait till I am in a better disposition and can find more fitting words to address Him with? and so put off asking His help to a more convenient season? Nay: for how do I know that He will ever pass my way again? This Lent, most of which I have misspent, may be my last; I may have only one more Holy Week and Easter to see in this world. If those blessed footsteps pass by me once more unheeded, it may be that never again will the Feet be so near me that were nailed for me to the cross. I will lift up my voice now to Christ. Do friends tell me that I am good enough already, or nearly so? I know better. Do learned men declare that it is presumption to trouble the Maker of the universe with my requests? I have His own word to the contrary. Now, if never before,—if often before, yet more earnestly, more insistently, let me say, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Have I sometimes begun to call and then stopped in deference to the world, or in obedience to my own faithless heart? Let me do better now and go on till the answer comes. Can it be? Do I hear, "Rise, He calleth thee?" Let me cast away whatever clings to and detains my steps, rise, and come close to Him. Does He say to me, "What wilt thou that I should do to thee?" Let me

at once make answer, "‘Lord, that I may receive my sight.’ Let me see myself as I really am. Standing near Thee I no longer shrink from the knowledge. His recovered sight may have shown Bartimæus that his clothes were more ragged, his sores worse than he had supposed. Like him, Lord, I am now willing to see how much worse are my motives, how much more evil my heart than I had thought they were. But before Bartimæus saw his own misery he had been privileged to behold Thy Face: his second look may have fallen on himself, his first must have been fixed on Thee. Even so I know that if thou openest the eyes of my mind, Thou wilt show me not only myself but Thyself. If I see that my wounds are many, I shall also see where grace abounds for their healing; if I see my own garment to be ragged, I shall also see Thy robe of spotless righteousness ready to be my covering. Let me see my guilt in order that I may behold Thy Goodness: my misery that Thy Mercy may be revealed to me!"

And do not even those who have long ago thus appealed from their own wretchedness to Christ, still find the prayer of Bartimæus suit them? does not a healing Hand need to be laid afresh and afresh upon their eyes, so long as they live in this world of blinding vapours? As Good Friday comes round again, does it not find even Christ's best servants complaining that they cannot behold His sorrows as they would? that they, too, need further enlightening in order that they may learn all His cross should teach them?

Bartimæus used his restored sight to "follow Jesus in the way." That way was the Via Crucis: that regained vision enabled him, in all probability, to behold the greatest spectacle ever exhibited to men, or to angels. In little more than a week, viewing the tortures of his Benefactor, he may have wished that he had remained blind. Ah! if the beggar of Jericho, summoned by Pilate's "Behold the Man," looked up at the Man of Sorrows, how must he have wondered when the crowd around could "see in Him no beauty that they should desire Him"? If he watched the procession along the Via Dolorosa, how must he have wept as he remembered how the Holy Feet which trod it with such pain had stayed their course the week before at his cry of distress! With what awe, standing among the spectators of the cross, must he have seen Him, Who had opened his eyes, close His own in death! But, on the other hand, how must he have blessed God again and again for his gift of sight, when he stood a few weeks later with the five hundred believers on the mountain of Galilee and beheld the risen Saviour! Even so, to view aright the mysteries of the Cross and the glories of the Resurrection, who would not beg for a clearing of the spiritual vision? who can pray earnestly enough for purged eyes wherewith to see the one great Sight which can "satisfy the eye with seeing?" Only let us remember that to *see* is not enough. Our eyes were given us to walk by. Bartimæus used his at once to "follow Jesus." If we are following Him in any measure, it is because we

have seen Him ; if (like S. Peter on the evening of the denial) we have hitherto only "followed Him afar off," it is because we have not seen Him clearly enough. Let us ask for power to do so now ; and henceforth closely to follow Him.

THE PRAYER.

Almighty God, who hast given us Thine only Son, to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life ; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that His inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sixth Thursday in Lent.

THE CONVERSION OF ZACCHÆUS.

"And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste and come down ; for to-day I must abide at thy house."—*S. Luke* xix. 5.

S. Luke tells us many interesting histories of our Lord's dealings with sinners, but none more instructive than this of His meeting with Zacchæus. Contrasting it with His meeting with Herod on the morning of Good Friday, I learn that men desired to see Jesus of old from very different motives : some, like Herod, from mere idle curiosity, which our Lord's silence sternly rebuked, others, like Zacchæus, from a humble longing at least to behold that

friend of sinners, to nearer intercourse with whom they dared not aspire; a holy wish which Christ fulfilled beyond their utmost expectations. Which then is my motive in reading the Bible, or going to church? Do I merely seek to inform my mind on religion without considering my own personal concern in it; or, worse still, gratify my curiosity by hearing celebrated preachers, and my vanity by getting qualified to talk well about the doctrines of the faith? or have I a real desire to "see Jesus," and to get to know Him as my own Saviour? If I have, this story assures me that my wish shall not remain unsatisfied. Zacchæus obtained more than he had ventured to hope for. He had expected, himself unseen, to see our Lord pass by, to mark His features, and to dwell in after-time on His holy and benignant countenance. But Christ's eye penetrated amid the thick, broad leaves of the tree into which he had climbed; and, whereas Zacchæus had not even looked for the honour of a passing word from Him, the Saviour offers him a visit: "Zacchæus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." And is it not still so that our blessed Lord does "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"? Conscious of my sinfulness I hardly dare to gaze on Him from afar; but He graciously offers to come very near me, yea even into my heart. This very day, in spite of my unworthiness, moved by my wretchedness, He offers to come and abide with me; bringing His riches into my poverty, His strength into my weakness, His love into my

coldness, His life into my death. Let me do as did Zacchæus. Wondering at Christ's condescension, let me, like him, "make haste and receive joyfully" into my heart Him Whom he received into his house.

How is it that He can bear to enter that heart, to mark the disorder and the ruin which sin has wrought in His handywork? He, the holy and the pure, coming in amid so much that is evil and polluted? "'Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof!' yet if, in unspeakable compassion, Thou Thyself offerest to do so, I dare not refuse Thee. I know that Thy mercies are freely given to the unworthy. I know Thy gracious purpose; make me willing fully to comply with it. Enter in and survey every corner of this Thy defiled and ruined temple, that Thou mayest both cleanse and restore it." Such, as I see, was Christ's design in entering the house of this publican. The bystanders "murmured, saying, that He was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." It seemed to them strange that this holy prophet should condone his entertainer's covetousness and act as if there had been no harm in his former mode of life. Stay a while, ye rash judges; it is the physician whom you are blaming for entering the house of the sick, which He will not leave till He has effected a wonderful cure. This covetousness of Zacchæus, so justly disapproved of by you, is far more hateful in Christ's eyes than it can possibly be in yours; He has gone in to destroy it, and, after this day, neither you nor Zacchæus shall see it again any more for ever.

Wait a few moments and the publican will stand forth and say, not to you, but to that good Lord on Whom he grieves to have brought reproach, what the manner of his future life shall be. He gives half of all he lawfully possesses to the poor; he makes ample restitution of all that he has taken unlawfully: from henceforth money will be his servant, not his master,—his treasure will be not on earth but in heaven. And Christ, Who cannot err, testifies at once to the reality of the change, and to its supreme importance. “Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” This then is salvation; for a man to be delivered from the power of sin and enabled to choose the true good instead of what he before falsely imagined to be such. Whichever sect among the Jews he might belong to, whatever religious opinions he might profess, Zachæus was a lost man in the sight of his future Judge so long as he loved money more than God. It was that ruin of his soul that Christ pitied and came to repair. And the salvation which He brought him was not merely forgiveness of past guilt, or a promise of acceptance at the Last Day. It was both these, but it was something more; a present deliverance from the love of the world and the gift of the power to love God. See, oh! my soul, that it is thus, and not otherwise, that thou thinkest of salvation. Remember that if thou art not saved now from thy evil desires and habits, thou

hast no warrant from Scripture for supposing that thou wilt be a partaker of that salvation which is hereafter to be revealed. So long as thou livest in the wilful practice of any sin,—however small in man's reckoning and excusable in thine own sight,—in God's account thou art lost; lost notwithstanding religious professions, lost amid ordinances duly observed, lost in spite of strongly excited feelings. For what shall it serve thee in the end to have admitted Christ with Zacchæus into thy house, if thou lettest Him depart thence without accepting at His hand the salvation which He comes to bring thee? He seeks thee: oh! be found of Him. His office is to save: oh! be not lost with a Saviour's offers sounding in thine ears.

It is to accomplish this salvation for thee, as well as for Zacchæus, that He is now on His way to Jerusalem. It is to redeem men "from their vain conversation, received by tradition from their fathers," that He is about to pay down, not what Zacchæus used to account riches, not "corruptible things as silver and gold," but His own most "precious blood." Yet a little while and the taunting cry will ring around His cross, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save;" and He will listen to it in silence in order that He may save thee from thy sins. The robber who will seek to be saved from his sin's punishment while keeping his affection for the sin will cry, "Save us," to Him and receive no answer. Take heed lest a like mistaken thought about salvation prove thy ruin also. Seek to be

saved according to that blessed word's real meaning ;
 "for the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity."

THE PRAYER.

O Seeker and Saviour of that which was lost,

Have mercy upon us.

Friend of sinners,

Have mercy upon us.

Redeemer from all iniquity,

Have mercy upon us.

From the love of sin, from covetousness and worldliness, from neglect of Thy great salvation,

Good Lord, deliver us.

By Thy weary journeyings, by Thy going onward to Thy Cross, by Thy steadfast patience on it, by the Blood Thou there didst shed as our Ransom,

Good Lord, deliver us.

That it may please Thee to redeem us from all iniquity, and to save us now from the love of every sin,

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee to enable us now joyfully to receive Thee as our Saviour, and so to fill our hearts with holiness that Thou mayest hereafter receive us into Thy Father's house,

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

Sixth Friday in Lent.

THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

“Occupy till I come.”—*S. Luke xix. 13.*

One parable of our Lord's is recorded as spoken by Him in this, as five in the next, week: the last of which, the Talents, bears a great resemblance to this one of the Pounds. S. Luke expressly tells us where He spoke this one, “nigh to Jerusalem,” and why; it was “because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.” It prepares the disciples instead for a long absence on their Master's part. He is going “into a far country.” First His death, and afterwards His ascension into heaven, would explain to them that part of it. He is going there, however, “to receive for Himself a kingdom, and to return.” During the time of His absence His servants will be engaged, more or less faithfully, in promoting His interests, while His authority will be openly defied by His enemies. His return will be the time of destruction to these; to His faithful servants of reward, to His slothful, of punishment. Such is the general teaching of this story; which spans many centuries, and carries our thoughts straight from the Ascension to Christ's glorious Second Advent. And it is remarkable how much that second coming seems to have been in our Lord's own thoughts during the last days of His earthly ministry. Now on the way to Jerusalem;

afterwards in the temple precincts where He spoke of the guest without a wedding-garment; again on the Mount of Olives, where He told four apostles of "the signs of His coming and of the end of the world;" once more, as, standing before Caiaphas, He declared His own future appearance in the clouds of heaven to judge those who were then judging Him; and lastly, when, on His way to Calvary, He spoke to the weeping women of the Day when sinners will cry to the rocks to hide them; our blessed Lord seems to have seen His own glory clearly behind the clouds of His present abasement, His future majesty and power all the more plainly for His present weakness. Let me take care to do the same, to keep together in my thoughts what my Master has thus connected; to heedfully remember the awful greatness of that Victim, Whose sufferings I am to spend next week in contemplating. As I gaze on the purple robe of scorn, the crown of thorns, the tormenting and deriding soldiers, let me think how ere long I shall see the Head crowned with many crowns, "the Face from which the earth and the heaven shall flee away," and consider how certain it is that we who in Holy Week behold the Cross, shall shortly see the "great white Throne." Of that sacrament which especially commemorates these things we learn, that it "shows the Lord's death till He come." How can I think rightly of that death unless I keep in mind that He Who was for me condemned to die, is the same Who is "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead"? How can

I have peace when I think of myself as about to stand before His tribunal, unless the Church's daily prayer is really mine, "We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge: We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood"?

The Day of Christ's appearing will, so this parable teaches us, be the day of the "everlasting destruction" of His open enemies. But it will not be a happy day for all His professed servants. Let me, as one of their number, attend to what I learn here about my own possible case. What is this pound which, unlike the talents in the later parable, entrusted to the different servants in varying amounts, is alike given in charge to each of us? I have heard it explained as the knowledge of the way of salvation; a gift possessed by every disciple of Christ, or else he would not be a disciple at all. What am I doing with this great gift? I see how well some are using it. Having laid hold of Christ for themselves, their most strenuous efforts are devoted, in season and out of season, to persuade others to do the same. By word and by example, by going on, or by sending missions to, the heathen at home and abroad, by spending their time, money, abilities, and influence in this great work, they are leading sinners to the Saviour. Some have given themselves to it earlier and some later; some choose the means more, and others less, wisely; human self-will may unawares have impaired the success of some, while others labour with entire devotion to

Christ's will in everything; but all are faithful, all, more or less, successful. For all such I here see the reward prepared, for each according to his fitness; he who is set over five cities will not wish himself in his brother's place who is set over ten; but each will rejoice to exercise in that vaster sphere the powers which he here trained for God. Happy servants! Happy then for me, if I can hope that I see my likeness among them! But do I? Or does the third man described in this parable represent me instead? He *had* the pound and kept it safe till his master came. Even so, I *have* the knowledge of Christ and His salvation; and in this faith I desire to live and die. So far well. But he kept his pound "laid up in a napkin" without making any use of it; and so at last it was taken from him. What then am I doing with my correct notions and my acquaintance with Scripture? Am I using them as my Lord meant me, first for my own spiritual profit, and then for that of others? or am I content with merely possessing them? "From him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." There is a loss of the sense of the power and beauty of Gospel truth, a dulling of the mind concerning it, which punishes the failure to act steadily in accordance with it, and the selfish neglect of making it known to others. Is this penalty beginning to be inflicted on me? O let me most earnestly implore my Saviour for grace to use His great gift agreeably to His intention; striving by His help to make it promote His glory, my own spiritual welfare, and

the everlasting good of souls. And to quicken my endeavours, let me steadily look forward to the day when I "must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." Not in his spirit who advises Christians evermore to see

"The Judge severe e'en in the Crucified ;"

but as one who wishes to please a great Deliverer, who dreads above all things losing hold of Him and returning to captivity. Is there in my heart the germ of all rebellion against God? does that lurk there secretly which in its essence is enmity to Christ; the thought which says, "We will not have this man to reign over us," "Not this man, but Barabbas"? Let me search the hidden chambers of my soul for these, my Lord's enemies and my own; or rather let me say to the Tryer of spirits, "Examine, O Lord, and prove me; look well if there be any way of wickedness in me." Self-examination is a very difficult duty; but it is a very needful one. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." How much better to discover our sins and shortcomings now, when they can be confessed, pardoned, and renounced, than to find them out in the light of Christ's return! Let me seek to discover mine, by the Spirit's help; resolving to destroy these traitors to my Saviour, these murderers of my own soul.

O Judge eternal, Who when Thou comest wilt say of those who have proved obstinate enemies to Thee and all goodness, "Bring them hither and slay them before Me," vouchsafe now to pronounce a like

sentence on "those Thine enemies which would not that Thou shouldest reign over them," within my heart; and give me the will and the power to execute that sentence upon them.

THE HYMN.

Thou Judge of quick and dead,
 Before whose bar severe,
 With holy joy, or guilty dread,
 We all shall soon appear;
 O warn us to prepare
 For that tremendous day;
 And fill us now with watchful care,
 And stir us up to pray;
 To pray, and wait the hour,
 The day and hour untold,
 When, robed in majesty and power,
 Our eyes shall Thee behold,
 The Son of man enthroned
 To judge all Adam's race,
 By all Thy Father's legions owned,
 With all Thy glorious grace.
 To temper earthly joys,
 And quicken duteous fears,
 For ever let the archangel's voice
 Be sounding in our ears
 The solemn midnight cry,
 "Arise! the Judge is come;
 Ye saints, go meet Him in the sky,—
 Ye sinners wait your doom."

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O may we then be found
Obedient to His word;
Attentive to the trumpet's sound,
And looking for the Lord!
O may we thus ensure
A lot among the blest;
Watch a brief while, and so secure
An everlasting rest.

C. WESLEY.

Sixth Saturday in Lent.

THE SUPPER AT BETHANY.

"Then said Jesus, Let her alone; against the day of My burying hath she kept this."—*S. John* xii. 7.

How calm and beautiful seems the last Sabbath of our Lord's earthly life. It was spent among friends in the holy household of Bethany; each in their own way testifying their love and reverence for Christ, and Mary coming forward to pour her precious ointment on Him Who had raised her brother from the dead. The scene is familiar to our minds. Lazarus at the table beside his deliverer, Martha waiting on her honoured guest, Mary bending over Him in dutiful love; Judas cavilling, the other Apostles wondering, but their Master approving. Let me fix my mind on the three principal figures in this picture: Christ, the woman who so revered Him, and the fallen apostle who found fault with her. And first let me look on the unhappy Judas. As at that greater Feast, to which the supper at Bethany

seems a prelude, he is out of harmony with the scene: those who surround him have one set of interests and he another; he is with them, but no longer of them. Their minds are fixed on Christ, his on himself. They may not always know the best way of doing it, but their object is to honour their Lord. The future which He is contemplating may be very indistinct to them; still their desire is to follow Him whithersoever He goeth. But the heart of Judas is set on money. Disappointed in his expectations of worldly aggrandisement from Christ's service, he has made up his mind to leave it; and, while counting over his dishonest gains as His purse-bearer, he is considering how he can increase them. And thus, while Mary in the prodigality of her love thinks no sum of money too large to expend on the costly ointment which she pours on her Saviour's feet, Judas is computing its price; and, under the show of regard for the poor, regretting his lost opportunity of secreting a portion of the sum. To what sin indulgence in such thoughts led Judas we all know; and how a few days later, Satan, entering into him, persuaded him to sell his Master for (as some think) an equal sum, or (as others) for a much smaller one than that which he had blamed Mary for wasting upon Him. Yet this selfish, sordid, covetous soul must once have had good in it; or else Christ would not have called Judas to be an apostle, neither would Judas have followed Christ.

Now I, like him, am a professed follower of the Saviour; am, like him, admitted to His fellowship and

suffered to eat and drink with Him. Let me therefore enquire seriously, whether my thoughts about Christ in any sense resemble his. He, at all events near the close of his course, followed Christ from wholly selfish motives. An expectation of a temporal reward was the dross that mingled with the fine gold of the other Apostles' service; but the service of Judas was entirely composed of that baser material. Now is the expectation of good things in the world to come my only motive in professing myself to be Christ's servant? Do I consider, not how much, but how little I can do for my Master without ceasing to be His? And am I angry, as Judas was, with those whose devotion to Him puts to shame my coldness? These are serious questions; for do not the contrasted figures of Mary and Judas teach me that if Christ is not everything to the soul, He is practically nothing to it, and that only opportunity and temptation are needed to hurry me into open apostasy, if while I call myself Christ's servant it is all the time myself that I am seeking in His service? O for that sight of Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" of souls, which Mary had enjoyed; the results of which appear in the love she showed Him! She had "sat at His feet and heard His word" till the world seemed to her as nothing; till its noises died away from her ear, its "many things" vanished from her sight, and the "good part"—to be God's and God's only—became her choice. She had fallen down before Him in her hour of sorrow, and seen His sympathy with her grief revealed by His tears and

sighs. She had heard His word of power, and seen the tomb give back her dead to her at His command. Does she enquire what she shall gain by serving Christ? Nay! for He Himself is her gain and her "exceeding great reward." So she gives herself wholly to Him; and all that she has follows as a matter of course. And therefore her "praise is in the Gospel;" and wheresoever it "is preached in the whole world, this also that she hath done is told for a memorial of her."

Lord! grant me grace to know Thee as Mary knew Thee; to sit in stillness during the coming week hearing Thy word; at Easter to "know Thee and the power of Thy Resurrection;" and then, because of this, to dedicate myself, and all I am or have, to Thee. To this intent, grant that I may have real communion with Thee to-morrow at Thy Holy Table. Grant that I may see Thee there truly present with us, as of old with the family at Bethany. Enlighten me to discern Thee there as Very God and Very Man. True Man, Thou didst accept of Mary's spikenard for "the day of Thy burying;" knowing that before this day week Thy Holy Body, wrapped with spices in white linen, would be laid in Joseph's new tomb. In this day's social gathering the thought was present to Thy mind of the death which was so soon to part Thee from Thy friends. "Me ye have not always," were Thy words to them; as though Thou wouldst say: "There is even now the shadow of death around My head, although you cannot see it. Ever since Adam

sinned, man hath gone forth with anxious care 'to his work and his labour until the evening.' Even so I, the Second Adam, Who have been long diligently working 'the work of Him that sent Me,' shall begin with to-morrow's light My last week of toil, and 'labour until the eve' of another Sabbath; when I, too, shall rest at last,—but My resting-place will be a grave." Dear Lord! as Thy coming death cast a holy sorrow over the supper at Bethany, even so it is the remembrance of that self-same Death which Thy Holy Supper now brings to our minds. Thou, then eating with Thy friends, wast about to die for them: we eat at Thy Table now in token that Thou hast died for us. O, in that sacred feast, fill us with grief for our sins which made Thee die; communicate to us Thy self-sacrificing love to destroy our selfishness and to enable us to devote afresh our souls and bodies to Thy service. And Thou, Who art Very Man, art also Very God. Therefore couldst Thou give the promise to Mary of that great reward, which Thou hast made good to her even unto this day; so that while the names of queens and empresses are forgotten, "this also that she hath done is told for a memorial of her," wheresoever Thy Gospel is preached: the pledge of the record concerning her in Thy Book of remembrance, wherein it shall be found written at the Last Day that "she hath done what she could." Therefore we seek at Thy Table, O my Saviour, not merely the memorials of Thy Death, but the presence of Thine endless Life in the power of Thy Godhead. Oh! by

that Love, which we there at once commemorate and partake of, I implore Thee to raise me from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, as of old Thou didst raise Lazarus from his tomb; that I, like him, may see Thee at Thy Table and there be made joyful by Thy presence; like Martha, be stirred up to render Thee all faithful service; and, like Mary, long to honour Thee, and gladly do all I can, whether it be little or much, to show my love to Thee. And grant, O my Saviour, that, as Thou meeting Thy friends after Thy resurrection didst once more eat with them, I may be so joined to Thee in this Thy holy feast that, after this life is over, I may rest in that love which Thou here revealest to me as in a glass darkly,—there to be more clearly seen. Grant that, when on me comes “the night in which no man can work,” I may be found to have worked “the work of God,” even “believed on Him whom He hath sent;” that so my night may “shine as the day,” through Thy presence, to Whom “the darkness and the light are both alike.” And grant that when the morning comes it may be to me according to Thy promise, “Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” Grant that I may then sit down with Thee at the everlasting feast, where Thy “servants shall serve” Thee, evermore seeing Thy face with great gladness; rejoicing to behold “all things put into subjection under the Feet” on which Mary poured her ointment. Grant that I, even I, may yet join in the new song of thanksgiving: “The Lord

reigneth, He is clothed with majesty. The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and He shall reign for ever and ever. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen. Amen."



Palm Sunday. (Morning.)

THE ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM.

"And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees and strawed them in the way."—*S. Matt.* xxi. 8.

My Saviour, I see Thee this morning the centre of an admiring crowd. Garments are laid, to honour Thee, at Thy feet; palm-branches are waved before Thee, while Thy road is strewn with leaves and flowers. I hear the air ring with shouts and joyful acclamations to the "King of Israel," "the Son of David." So it ought ever to have been; for before whom could tokens of homage so fitly be laid as before "the Lord of glory"? whom do palms so well suit as the Conqueror of death? Where should the joy, expressed of old by God's people in their glad processions at the feast of tabernacles, flow so freely as around Thee, the true Joshua, come to give them rest in the heavenly Canaan? Well may they bid Thee welcome with the words of the Psalm which belongs to that high festival, "Blessed is he that

cometh in the name of the Lord ; Hosanna in the highest ;" for when did God's people before come so near their promised happiness?

And such as Thou didst this morning present Thyself to the outward eye, dost Thou continually offer Thyself, O Christ, to the spiritual vision. A King "just and having salvation;" powerful through Thy righteousness "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Thee." But still a lowly King; not compelling, but inviting, the submission of Thy subjects, drawing them to Thyself by Thy love and Thy benefits.

There is a multitude who walk before Thee—the patriarchs, prophets and saints of the old dispensation, who foretold Thee by their words, or foreshadowed Thee by their deeds. A far vaster crowd follow—Thy apostles, martyrs, and faithful members in every age. And all these alike cry "Hosanna;" for Thou art the Saviour of them all, and it is as Thy subjects and Thy soldiers that they march to the heavenly Jerusalem. These have in very deed strewed Thy path with branches; for by Thy Spirit's help they have cut down their sinful thoughts and habits, and laid them to perish beneath Thy feet. These, of a truth, have there laid down their garments; for the bodies of Thy faithful servants are a living sacrifice unto Thee, and Thy martyrs have offered theirs to Thee by death.

I go forth to meet Thee in their company, begging Thee that I may share with them in Thy great salvation, and be enabled to devote myself like them to

Thy service. Grant this, dear Lord! So may I be found with them on that joyful day when, their march finished, "clothed in white robes and palms in their hands," they shall cry, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

But, at least on this morning, be not so enraptured, O my soul! by this most happy prospect, that thou hast no eyes with which to mark the vast cost at which it was opened to thee. This King cometh in the Name of the Lord to gain for thee an everlasting salvation; but what must He not pay for it! He has come to grant thy prayer; but what must He not suffer that He may do so! All to-day looks bright and beautiful. But "things are not what they seem." Sadness lurks behind this joy. Before the great Conqueror can overthrow sin and Satan, He must tread the winepress alone and dye His garments with His own blood. Before He can rise bearing the palm-branch of victory in His hand, the Prince of Life must visit the dark realms of death. These shouts that now ring around Him are the shouts before victory of untrained and inexperienced soldiers. The Captain of our salvation is silent and thoughtful; for He well knows how awful will be the conflict through which He must make them good. He rides on in calm majesty to the battle-field; but He is not ignorant, as are His followers, of the suffering that awaits Him there. He knows how on that day of gloom which is coming, the sights and sounds which salute Him now will be exchanged for their exact contraries. These joyful acclama-

tions will soon die away, and He will hear in their stead the cry of man's madness, as the wrong choice is made, "Not this man, but Barabbas;" the cry of human rage and cruelty, "Away with this man, crucify Him, crucify Him;" and the yet worse accents of fiendish malice at the foot of the cross itself, "Let Christ, the King of Israel, come down from the cross, that we may see and believe;" "He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him." Flowers and green boughs now strew the victor's road; but before the victory is accomplished, another tree will have been despoiled, another garland twined, for Him; and instead of flowers at His feet, thorns will encircle His head. Other raiment, too, will replace the garments now spread in His way. Herod's white vestment of scorn, the purple robe brought by Pilate's soldiers, will clothe the august victim in unfeeling mockery; until at last He hangs naked, stripped of all things, on the accursed tree. He Who now enters as in a triumph the gate of Jerusalem, will come forth from its gate a few days hence, pale and bleeding, bearing the cross on which He is about to suffer. "Thus I entered and thus I go," may He truly say to each of us. "Sin, thy sin along with the rest, has made this sad change, and given Me, for pleasure pain, for honour shame, for life death. I do not repent My offer, I do not retract My promise, to suffer what is needful for thy deliverance. See thou, for thy part, that, as far as concerns thee, this sad departure shall not have followed My joyous entrance in vain."

THE HYMN.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die!
O Christ, Thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquered sin.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
The wingèd squadrons of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes,
To see the approaching Sacrifice!

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
Thy last and fiercest strife is nigh;
The Father, on His sapphire throne,
Expects His own anointed Son.

Ride on! Ride on in majesty!
In lowly pomp ride on to die!
Bow Thy meek Head to mortal pain,
Then take, O God, Thy power and reign.

MILMAN.



Palm Sunday. (Afternoon.)

THE VISIT OF THE GREEKS.

"Sir, we would see Jesus."—*S. John* xii. 21.

It should seem that some time on this very day, "certain Greeks" made interest with one of the Apostles to introduce them to our Lord. These religious proselytes of an alien race had been as much aroused by the tidings of the raising of Lazarus as

were the Jews themselves ; and they longed to see Him Who had done this mighty work. The Greeks, as a nation, dearly loved the life which was made so pleasant to them by their climate, their culture, and their refined civilisation ; and they had very gloomy thoughts about death. We need not then wonder that they wished to see One Who had proved Himself able to vanquish Hades, the tyrant whose stern rule they so greatly abhorred ; and that having " come up to worship at the feast," the desire which they expressed to S. Philip was, " We would see Jesus." May their wish be always mine ! and may I especially remember, concerning all the services of this holy week, that they will bring me no real profit unless I too succeed in seeing Him in them. But to-day what most arrests my attention is my Saviour's answer, when told by SS. Andrew and Philip of these foreigners' desire : " The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone : but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." As though He would say, " I see a vast company advancing towards Me, even all the children of Adam, longing to regain the life and happiness which were lost by their father. I alone can satisfy that desire. I, and I only, glorified in the heavens, can be the fountain of a new life to the race. But even I cannot be such to them as yet. I live indeed amidst a dead world ; for ' the Father hath given to the Son to have life in Himself.' But this life cannot now flow from Me

to men. I am in My present state like the corn of wheat abiding alone. And just as it cannot spring up multiplied until it has been buried in the earth, even so I cannot appear as the source of all spiritual life,—the Head with My many members, the Vine with My many fruitful branches,—until I, too, have died and been buried. Then, and not till then, shall I arise bringing forth much fruit. Not simply by working miracles, or by preaching the word of truth, or even by setting a faultless example of goodness, can I save mankind. I must atone for their sin by suffering, must die that their guilt may be pardoned. When that great reconciliation has been effected, I shall be able to stand forth as the new head and centre of mankind—the Second Adam—‘alive for evermore,’ and around Me ‘the children which God hath given me,’ quickened through Me to the life eternal.”

And then our Lord goes on to speak of the process through which men will attain to a share in the new life which He is about to win for them. He tells of life lost through being loved in excess; of a higher life gained through a courageous casting away of the life of the body. “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” And He shows us where all our desires should tend, by proceeding to ask, not for escape in His own approaching peril, but that His Father’s Name might be glorified in it, as already by His life and preaching.

Dare I ask myself whether I present any likeness

to my divine model in this? whether S. Paul's wish "to magnify Christ, whether by life, or by death," is mine, in any sense? At least let me note that same Apostle's words about mortifying the deeds of the body in order that we may truly live; and resolve to seek for that death of selfishness in the soul which is the necessary condition of the spiritual life's unfolding. Let me remember that, as long as I live unto myself, Christ, so far as I am concerned, has died in vain; and let me endeavour to "arm myself with the same mind" "which was also in Christ Jesus;" that I, for Whose sake He died, may for His sake die to sin.

THE PRAYER.

O Eternal Father, who, having glorified Thy great name once by the earthly course of Thy dear Son, didst glorify it again by His death and resurrection; Be pleased to conform me to that death by enabling me to die to sin, that so I may be a partaker of His resurrection, in holiness here and in glory hereafter; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Monday before Easter.

THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF THE CROSS.

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."—*S. John* xii. 32.

These words of my Saviour, spoken yesterday, seem to ring in my ears to-day. True and faithful, like all His sayings, the prediction which they con-

tain began to be fulfilled on the first Good Friday, and will continue being accomplished on an ever larger scale till the end of this world. The Cross, from the very first, has been the caller-forth of love and hatred; of hatred how bitter! of love how devoted! but it never fails to engage the eyes and thoughts of men. No sooner was it raised on Calvary than the crowd pressed round it; and it drew to itself the unthinking multitude with their taunts, the Scribes and Pharisees with their deeply-meditated malice, the Roman centurion with his look, at first indifferent, then respectful, then reverential; the holy women with their love and sorrow, the blessed Virgin and S. John with an affection deeper, a grief more agonised, than words can describe; even attracting the gaze of the malefactors on each side of it, to prove to the one a savour of death, to the other, of life. But no spectator was uninterested, none was unmoved; and where the sight was so surveyed that it did not bring a blessing, it left a curse: it made men worse, if it did not make them better.

From that day to this, wheresoever "Christ is evidently set forth crucified among" men,—whether by means of the holy sacrament of His Body and Blood, or by the faithful preaching of the Cross; whether by the story of His sufferings read in some lonely chamber, or by the example of Christians who bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord,"—men are drawn to the Cross either to scoff or to adore, to oppose or to embrace; and sometimes, thanks be to God! to do the second even after they

have done the first. And who can wonder that it possesses this attractive force? Who will think it

“strange the darkest hour
That ever dawned on sinful earth,
Should touch the heart with softer power
For comfort than an angel's mirth”?

who, that is, that really knows what Good Friday means?

Men are drawn by the marvellous; and what so miraculous as that God should become man, in order that He might taste death? Men are drawn by a promise (and what empty promises of the sort have they not believed!) of a communication with that unseen world, of which they know so little, yet which they must so soon enter. How then can they fail to hasten to the spot where stands Jacob's ladder; no longer a fair vision of the night, but a blessed reality of the day,—the plain and safe road from earth to heaven? But men are yet more powerfully attracted by the offer of release from evil. Where then should the guilty go, but to the place where they may see their bond of suffering cancelled? where should the defiled hasten, but to the spot where flows the “fountain for sin and uncleanness”? whither should those in whose veins courses the serpent's poison speed, save where they may look at the uplifted brazen Serpent and live?

Men's eyes are rivetted by beauty. Great and fair thoughts in poetry, noble and lovely forms in art,—and yet more the conceptions of the Great

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Poet, the works of the Great Artist, in the glories of nature,—attract our admiration and are sought by pilgrims from distant lands. Now in the Cross is the perfection of moral beauty; self-sacrifice in its utmost grandeur, disinterested love in its utmost completeness, find their expression here and satisfy men's noblest instincts: would it not then be wonderful if the sight failed to attract them? Goodness is of all things most beautiful. Men admire it apart from any advantage which they hope to gain from it. Tales of heroic virtue, shown in hours of stern trial, make our hearts beat high with generous sympathy and joy at the honour thus reflected on our race. How then shall men remain unmoved at the sight of the noblest heroism exhibited in their own nature? Must not its display attract each man in proportion to his own sense of moral goodness?

But, above all things, man's heart is drawn by love. Undeserved kindness can melt it, however hard; affection, given unexpectedly and freely, win it, however stubborn. How then shall it fail to be irresistibly attracted to Him Who, not because we deserved it, or even desired it, but because we needed it, has commended His free love towards us, "in that while we were yet sinners He died for us"?

This great sight, then, is one in which all men are concerned. No man can truthfully reject the august Victim's touching appeal: "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there is any sorrow like to My sorrow." All men's consciences whisper that they have a share in the guilt which

occasioned that sorrow; that they may, if they please, have a part in the blessings which it has obtained. The sense of sin in each human breast is the iron on which the mighty magnet works. But still that magnet is a moral, not a physical, agent. It only draws; it does not drag. It inclines man's will; it does not force it. All who have ever seen the Cross have felt its attraction; but, as of old many resisted it, so many resist it still. This week then, above all weeks in the year, let me ask myself what the Cross is to me. What do I personally know of its attracting power? What has it drawn me from? what has it drawn me to? What sin, to which I once dwelt perilously near, now lies far behind me, because the Cross has drawn me away from it? What step in holiness which once seemed beyond my reach, is it now within my power to take because the crucified Saviour has drawn me to it? Has He Himself become, as He ought to be, the centre of my thoughts,—the sun round which my plans and wishes move? Is it so with me, if not as completely as I desire, yet in any good degree? Am I at least nearer to it than I was this time last year? Or have my daily Bible-readings, my frequent communions proved vain? Is there some subtle counter-attraction which has hitherto neutralised the effect of the Cross on my spirit? Must I sadly ask myself, as the Apostle asked the Galatians, "O foolish one, who has bewitched thee that thou shouldest not obey the truth?" Is it the world? and, if so by which of its many allurements? Is it the flesh,

with its enticements to sloth and self-indulgence? Is it the devil, with his whispers of unbelief? Or is it all three? Lord, who alone canst overcome them, put forth Thy grace to counter-work their evil spells. Draw me to Thyself, in spite of my own heart, in spite of my spiritual enemies; and make me wholly Thine!

THE HYMN.

O my Saviour, lifted
From the earth for me,
Draw me, in Thy mercy,
Nearer unto Thee.
Lift my earth-bound longings,
Fix them, Lord, above;
Draw me with the magnet
Of Thy mighty love.
Lord, Thine Arms are stretching
Ever far and wide,
To enfold Thy children
To Thy loving side.
And I come, O Jesus:
Dare I turn away?
No! Thy love hath conquered,
And I come to-day,
Bringing all my burdens,
Sorrow, sin, and care,
At Thy feet I lay them,
And I leave them there.

BISHOP WALSHAM HOW.

Monday before Easter. (Afternoon.)**THE SINLESSNESS OF CHRIST.**

"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."—*S. John* xiv. 30.

On this day of the Holy Week, Christ cast the buyers and sellers out of God's temple at Jerusalem. It is His continual office now to cleanse His Church in like manner; making men into living temples of the Holy Ghost, and their hearts into houses of prayer. His words, read to us in this evening's Lesson, remind us how, in His own case alone, no such purifying work was ever required. Other men need to have "the thoughts of their hearts cleansed by the inspirations of His Holy Spirit;" but His were clean from the first. Conceived and born without taint of original sin, the Psalmist said in His name, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," and that will He ever did on earth, even more perfectly than the angels do it in heaven; finding it His "meat to do the will of Him that sent" Him. To His innocence friends bore willing, and foes unwilling, witness. They were not attached disciples, but captious opponents, who found themselves unable to answer Christ's challenge, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" It was no enthusiastic follower, but the unjust judge who was pronouncing sentence on Him, who was compelled, while he did so, to bear witness to the righteousness of "the Just One." His own words here, and He is the Truth,

confirm the saying of His Apostle Paul, that He "knew no sin." For when Satan comes against the best of men he finds something in them: sins in their past through which he can terrify their conscience, evil tendencies in the present through which he can work them harm. Christ alone can testify truly, as He does here, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me." For, whereas into every other sanctuary of God in the human breast sin's hateful presence has intruded, His holy heart is a shrine unviolated by any thought of ill. And therefore He awaits the approach of death as no other man ever could, or ever will. When it is seen drawing near to other men, the bluntest conscience feels alarm; while even God's most faithful servants see much in their retrospect of life to regret, much for which to ask forgiveness from their heavenly Father. But Christ, and Christ only, can look back on His whole past life and see nothing there to disturb His peace, nothing done amiss, no failure in loving duty; and can say to His Father with holy gladness, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

Now what joy the sight of this sinless perfection in my Lord must give me. One of the first things to pain the heart as the understanding opens is the discovery of human imperfection, of weakness where we had childishly thought all was strength, of folly mixed with wisdom, of sin with holiness. But in Christ our lost ideal is more than restored to us. In Him meets

every feature that makes God's image in man complete; and no wavering line, no dimness of colouring mars its full magnificence. In all other men, even the most saintly, there is something to wish otherwise; something to excuse on the score of human frailty. Not so here. On this spectacle of faultless goodness, the very angels themselves gaze with awe; while He, in Whose searching sight "the stars are not pure," looks down on it and is well pleased. What a sight then for me to behold! How should I desire to meditate daily on the life of my sinless Lord; and especially on it as its fine gold, tried in the searching fires of this week's suffering, reveals its exceeding brightness more and more! And, since it can only be really seen by the pure in heart, let me pray to be so daily renewed by the Holy Spirit, that, beholding in my Master's life, "as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, I may be changed into the same image by the Spirit."

Let me recollect further the blessed consequences to our whole race of this Second Adam's purity. He speaks here of Himself as our champion awaiting the onslaught of our cruel oppressor. Against Him now, as against Adam and all his sons before, the devil advances as a strong man armed. But whereas they all, to their sorrow, found him an invincible antagonist, here now stands the David Who can lay this Goliath low.

"Who is this?" is Isaiah's question in the grand chapter read for the Epistle this morning, at the sight of a mighty conqueror. "Who is this?" men

might well ask, seeing One ready to overthrow the power of the prince of darkness. "I that speak in righteousness," is the answer. And it is because He is the Righteous One that He proves "mighty to save." The great victory, then, which we commemorate this week was won by holiness. If so, innocence must be the true strength. Ah! how foolish it has been of me ever to act as though I thought otherwise; as though falsehood could in the end prevail over truth, selfishness over love, and evil over good!

Again, let me reflect on my Lord's absolute holiness as His qualification to be a sacrifice for our sins. I know how the law rejected all victims that had any defect about them. I know how God expressly commanded that the Paschal lamb must be free from blemish. In Christ I see the antitype. It is because He is altogether immaculate that the offering of Himself upon the Cross can take away the sins of the whole world. During these early days of the holy week my Lord's enemies were watching Him closely to find occasion against Him, as from the tenth to the fourteenth day they closely inspected the lambs intended for the Passover, to see if they were in any way unfit for it. But they could find no fault in Him. The blood shed on Calvary was the blood of a spotless Victim.

And as with the sacrifice, so with the sacrificing priest. The law could only secure to its priests a relative and ceremonial holiness. It could cleanse their hands and feet with water; but their own sins

needed an offering, and, on the great Day of Atonement, the high-priest went into the Holy of Holies with blood which he offered for his own sins, before he made the offering "for the errors of the people." But it is otherwise with our High-Priest; He "is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" "In all points tempted like as we are," He was yet perfectly unlike us in this, that He was always "without sin." Look, then, with reverence, O my soul, on

"The feet which earth might pierce, but could not stain,"

now about to bear a willing victim for thy sake to the great altar. See what "holy hands," holy in the highest conceivable sense, are about to be there lifted up for thee; and pray that, from henceforth, being "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," thou mayest have grace whereby to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For this sacrifice, so unique in its nature and in its Offerer, is never to be again repeated; and for those who sin away their share in it, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" for ever.

THE HYMN.

O Thou Who in this Holy Week
Didst suffer for us all,
The sick to heal, the lost to seek,
To raise up them that fall;

We cannot tell the bitter woe
That Thou wast pleased to bear,
O Lamb of God, we only know
That all our hopes are there.

Thy Feet the path of suffering trod,
Thy Hands the victory won;
What can we render to our God
For all that He has done?

O grant us, Lord, with Thee to die,
With Thee to rise anew;
Grant us the things of earth to fly,
The things of heaven pursue.

NEALE. *Church Hymns*, S.P.C.K. 116.



Tuesday before Easter.

UNION WITH CHRIST.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."—*S. John xv. 4.*

We look this morning, while in spirit we accompany our Master from Bethany to Jerusalem, at a withered tree, which yesterday He cursed because it bore no fruit. We understand the parable in action; and learn from this picture-lesson how profession without practice, good words followed by no good deeds, privileges which produce no holiness in their possessor, will draw down God's anger. I have

reason to fear lest this should be my own case when I think of my many opportunities of learning God's will and my small improvement of them, of vows ill-performed, of means of grace used frequently without my being really the better for them. So how carefully should I attend to this Morning's Second Lesson, in which Christ sets Himself forth to us as the True Vine; for do not His words concerning it point out to me my only remedy? If, in order to do better than I have done, I depend on my own good resolutions and my own endeavours, what, judging of the future by the past, have I cause to think will be the result? real, sound, good fruit, or leaves, and leaves only? Not the first but the last, I have but too much reason to expect; for the appearance of religion is easily put on, while religion itself, as a deep-seated principle, is hard to graft in these hearts of ours. As the seemingly fruitful tree disclosed its true barrenness the moment there was a searching investigation into its condition, so is my real state open even now to the sight of Him "Whose eyes are as a flame of fire," What does He discern it to be? Am I "but the shadow" of a Christian as He sees me, "the name and not the thing"? And shall I be manifested as such to my own self and to all men in the Day which will declare all things? Can no efforts of my own prevent this? Will the fairest show which they can produce prove to be only fruit brought from a distance and fastened to the branch, not its genuine outgrowth? that is to say, dead works proceeding from selfish

motives, neither the result, nor the evidence, of a renewed heart?

If so, and if this is what I ought long ago to have learned from my Saviour's words, "Without Me ye can do nothing," let me endeavour to comply with the condition on which He promises me fruitfulness. He charges me to abide in Him, trust and cling to Him only for strength to do right, and that not occasionally but habitually; and then He says that I shall be like a branch, grafted into a healthy tree, nourished by its sap and living with its life; for, being quickened by His Spirit, I shall be strengthened by Him to bring forth fruit unto holiness, to the glory of His Father.

For this purpose He chose me (not I Him) in my helpless infancy, joined me to Himself, and began to stir my heart by His Spirit. Do I not see how anything that was ever good in me came from that blessed union? Must I not grieve over the self-sufficiency, the unbelief, which have so often disturbed it? Must I not marvel at the patience which has borne with me even when I ceased to abide consciously and believingly in Him at all, and so became a withered branch fit for the fire? Can I ever thank Him humbly enough for renewing me to some measure of trust in Him? to the desire to dwell in Him and have Him dwell in me? O let me implore Him to unite me more effectually to Himself; to make me one of those happy people who "have their life, their abiding in Him; their union and, as it were, their incorporation with

Him." Nothing is so worthless as a dead vine-branch: so then if I, in outward communion with Him Who is "the Life," still remain spiritually dead, how desperate will be my case, how certain my destruction! But Christ does not wish this to happen; nay, His promise to me, if my unbelief does not frustrate it, is, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." "Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word."

O Thou Who didst "lay down Thy life for Thy friends," make me one of those faithful friends of Thine, who do whatsoever Thou commandest them. Thou Who makest glad the heart of man, by bidding us drink of the fruit of Thee the true Vine, grant that as I do so I may mourn with godly sorrow over the bitter cup which I handed to Thee in exchange for Thy cup of consolation. Let me say, "Remembering" Thine "affliction and" Thy "misery, the worm-wood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me." But this, even Thy readiness to taste them for me, "I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul; Thou hast redeemed my life." (Lam. iii. 19, 20, 21, 57, 58.) I beseech Thee therefore let that life be precious in Thy sight; maintain Thine own mercies in me; abide henceforth in me, and enable me to abide in Thee.

THE HYMN.

Let my life be hid with Thee,
Gracious Saviour, Lord of might,
Saved from sin, from danger free,
Lightened by Thy perfect light.

Let my life be hid with Thee
When my cruel foes surround,
Covered by Thy panoply,
Safe within Thy holy ground.

Let my life be hid with Thee
When my soul is vexed below;
Let me still Thy mercy see,
When bowed down with grief and woe.

Let my life be hid with Thee
When in death I sink and fail,
Lest my raging enemy
In that dying hour prevail.

Let my life be hid with Thee,
Bound within Thy Life above,
Living through eternity
In the realms of peace and love.

First Hymn Book of S.P.C.K. 268.



Tuesday Afternoon.**CHRIST'S PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT.**

**"When the Comforter is come, ... even the Spirit of truth ...
He shall testify of Me."**—*S. John* xv. 26.

It may be that I was made sad in church this morning as I listened to the second Gospel of the Passion, by feeling my heart not so much moved as I expected it to be by that strange, sad story. Perhaps I am ready to say, "Surely I cannot love my Saviour at all, or, as I stand beholding the sorrows which He endured for me, they would touch me more." Perhaps, too, as I began my examination preparatory to the Easter communion, I was alarmed to find how little the recollection of past sin grieves me, even now when all things conspire to impress its exceeding sinfulness on my mind.

If so, what is the remedy? Shall I try some kind of religious excitement, and endeavour by its help to work up my feelings to what seems to me the right pitch? Not so; for mere excited feelings are not true religion; and, when they subside, they leave the soul duller and colder than ever. And were they ever so lasting and so apparently holy, there would be danger in trusting to them and not to Christ. Safer, far, is the faith which when, in the words of to-day's Epistle, "it walketh in darkness and hath no light," can still "trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon its God." I am there warned not to "walk in the light of my fire, and

in the sparks that I have kindled." But am I then to rest satisfied with my present coldness? No; but I am to look for its removal not to man but to God. Not any outward help to devotion, however good in its place, but the Spirit of truth, God the Holy Ghost Himself, bears effectual witness to Christ in man's soul. Perhaps I have entered on this holy week without sufficiently honouring Him, by relying only on His aid. Perchance I have thought that its solemn memories and services could not fail to bring the Cross savingly before me, and forgotten my Saviour's words, "He shall testify of Me." Let me remember how many people were witnesses of the actual Crucifixion without being the better for the sight. Let me recollect Christ's words by His prophet: "I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look on Me Whom they have pierced," and let me entreat Him to fulfil those words to me. The Holy Ghost is the sap that gives life and fruitfulness to the branches of the true vine. Godly sorrow for sin, repentance, love, and all other Christian graces, are His work in the soul. But Christ has promised Him to His disciples; promised that He "shall teach them all things, and bring all" His words "to their remembrance." Unworthy as I am, I am still a disciple of His. Let me then implore the Comforter to come and "take of the things of Christ, and show them unto me."

THE HYMN.

Spirit of God, that moved of old
Upon the waters' darkened face,
Come, when our faithless hearts are cold,
And stir them with an inward grace.

Thou that art Power and Peace combined,
All highest Strength, all purest Love,
The rushing of the mighty wind,
The brooding of the gentle dove;

Come give us still Thy powerful aid,
And urge us on, and keep us Thine;
Nor leave the hearts, that once were made
Fit temples for Thy grace divine :

Nor let us quench Thy sevenfold light;
But still with softest breathings stir
Our wayward souls—and lead us right,
O Holy Ghost, the Comforter !

First Hymn Book of S.P.C.K. 84.

Wednesday before Easter.

DOMINE QUO VADIS ?

“None of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?”—*S. John*
xvi. 5.

This question in our Morning Lesson is one which
it befits us to ask our Lord with reverence on this day

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of His betrayal; the day on which Judas made his guilty bargain with "the priests and captains of the temple." The first step towards Christ's death has now been taken, He has ended His public ministry, He has delivered His great prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the world; He has returned to Bethany for the last time. Now we may humbly ask Him, "Lord, whither goest Thou" on the morrow? Listen, O my soul! to His answer: "I go after sunset to the garden of sorrows, there to encounter that foe who met Adam in his garden of delights; and as I overcame the enemy of mankind in the wilderness where he offered Me all pleasant things, even so shall I vanquish him when, in the cold shade of the olives of Gethsemane, he will try to turn Me aside from the right path by the fear of all things that are shameful and terrible. As angels ministered unto Me in the desert, so in the garden will one bring Me support, to prevent life from departing ere its time in the agony which there awaits Me. For there I must 'tread the wine-press alone,' and dye My garments with My own blood. There, as Jacob once, must I wrestle in prayer; saving the eternal life of My children, as he saved the temporal life of his, by supplications in which 'as a prince I shall have power with God and shall prevail.'"

And after that terrible conflict and dear-bought victory, "Lord, whither goest Thou?"

"I go from that strange, new Eden, to the scene of My latest fight and triumph; from Gethsemane to Calvary. My way there lies through the halls of

Annas and Caiaphas; through the palace of Herod and the prætorium of Pontius Pilate; along the street which My blood is to mark, through the gate of the city. By that painful road I go to the Tree, where the sin committed at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is to be atoned for. There, for the last time, will man's deadly foe assail Me. In the gloom which will then overshadow all things, the prince of this world with his dark legions, and I the King whose 'kingdom is not of this world,' shall have our last encounter. 'He cometh, but hath nothing in Me.' There shall I win the great battle for thy salvation; despoiling the principalities and powers of evil, 'making a show of them openly, triumphing over them' on the Cross."

And then, "Lord, whither goest Thou?"

"Whither I go, then, thou canst not follow Me even in thought now; but be thou faithful unto death and thou shalt follow Me afterward: for I go to the paradise of God. But I shall not rest there long. Soon, with the spirits of My saints, there selected to return with Me to earth, shall I revisit this world, rebuild the ruined temple of My body, and raise theirs from the dust as witnesses of My resurrection."

And then, "Lord, whither goest Thou?"

"After forty days, into the holy place not made with hands, even into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for thee; entering in, once for all, with Mine own blood to obtain eternal redemption for all that shall believe in Me. And

then, when the appointed days shall have been fulfilled, I shall come forth from that hidden sanctuary, and appear the second time, with no more offering for sin, unto the salvation of them that look for Me."

O mighty Captain of our salvation, Who goest before us this week along a blood-stained road, weeping, as did Thy father David once, "by the ascent of Mount Olivet," but Who art soon to return with joy bringing the trophies of Thy conquest with Thee, be mindful of us Thy weak and feeble followers, save us from the power of the wicked one: remember at how great a cost Thou didst "finish the transgression, make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity," and finish Thine own work in us; make us "more than conquerors" over the principalities and powers of darkness, and at the last "bruise Satan under our feet."

THE HYMN.

O Thou, the Eternal Son of God,
The Lamb for sinners slain,
We worship Thee, Whose head is bowed
In agony and pain.

None tread with Thee Thine awful path
Thou sufferest alone;
Thine is the perfect Sacrifice
Which only can atone.

Thou great High-Priest, Thy glory-robcs
To-day are laid aside ;
And human sorrows, Son of Man,
Thy Godhead seem to hide.

The Cross is sharp, but in Thy woe
This is the lightest part ;
Our sin it is which pierces Thee,
And breaks Thy sacred heart.

Who love Thee most, at Thy dear Cross,
Will truest, Lord, abide ;
Make Thou that Cross our only hope,
O Jesu Crucified !

C. DIX. *Church Hymns, S.P.C.K.* 121.

Wednesday Afternoon.

THE PROMISE OF CHRIST'S RETURN.

"I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."—*S. John xvi. 22.*

We are reminded at the close of this day's Epistle that as surely as "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of the many," so surely "unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

It was possibly as on this very afternoon, that our Lord sat on the Mount of Olives watching the setting sun, and predicting the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Let me never forget the words of warning which He then spoke, and how earnestly He charged us, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." But His words—spoken as to-morrow after instituting the Sacrament of His Body and Blood—the concluding part of which form this evening's Lesson, invite us to look at His Second Coming, not so much as the appearance of a Judge as the return of a friend. They prolong the cheerful note, already struck in the prophecy on the Mount amid deeper and more awful tones, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh!" For the Master's discourse in the upper chamber at Jerusalem opens with the blessed assurance, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." And here, towards its close, on the way to Gethsemane, He repeats the words, "I will see you again." No doubt these last words found their first fulfilment on Easter Day, and are being fulfilled continually to His people now; but their perfect accomplishment is reserved for the great day of His final appearing. Then will Christ's faithful servants enter into the joy of their Lord; His "righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Then will they see Him as He is, and,

so seeing Him, rejoice with joy unspeakable and everlasting.

This precious promise comes to cheer faithful hearts amidst the deepening gloom of this solemn week, as Gabriel came to comfort Daniel ¹ while fasting, in sackcloth and ashes, he besought God's mercy for his people. He told him of the first Advent, of how Messiah the Prince should "be cut off, but not for Himself;" and how He, by the one offering of Himself, should "cause the sacrifice of the oblation to cease." But we hear from our kingly Priest's own lips the assurance that, these great things having been accomplished for us, we before long shall be allowed to see Him face to face, and to praise Him for them, standing in His presence. And we know that we can trust His word. For the joy of bringing these things to pass, He "endured the Cross, despising the shame," the solemn commemoration of which is now so near at hand. What surer pledge can we wish for than this that He will come to claim His dearly-purchased possession, and see performed the desire of His heart? For "in the same night in which He was betrayed," He said, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory."

How do such thoughts affect my mind? Am I "rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory" in the expectation of "the appearing of Jesus Christ"? Can I say from my heart what a holy

¹ See First Evening Lesson.

woman, now with Christ, said so beautifully and devoutly ?

“Thou art coming, O my Saviour,
Thou art coming, O my King,
In Thy beauty all-resplendent,
In Thy glory all-transcendent,
Well may we rejoice and sing;
Coming! In the opening east
Herald brightness slowly swells;
Coming! O my glorious Priest,
Hear we not Thy golden bells?

“Thou art coming, Thou art coming;
We shall meet Thee on Thy way,
We shall see Thee, we shall know Thee,
We shall bless Thee, we shall show Thee
All our hearts could never say;
What an anthem that will be,
Ringling out our love to Thee,
Pouring out our rapture sweet
At Thine own all-glorious Feet!”

Pilate said of Christ to the Jews contemptuously on the first Good Friday, “Behold your King.” How should I feel if an angel told me, “On this coming Good Friday thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty,” coming to be admired in all them that believe?

“The Head that once was crowned with thorns,
Is crowned with glory now;
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty Victor’s brow,”

and it is ordained in the counsels of heaven, that this very anniversary of the day of Christ’s humilia-

tion in death, should be the day of His manifestation in the splendour of His excellent glory. Should I be able to answer joyfully and truthfully, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly?" Let me entreat Him to fill my heart with such love towards Him, that I may ever abide in the number of those who "love His appearing," who "know that when He shall appear they shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is;" and who, "having this hope in them, purify themselves, even as He is pure," while their souls wait for His coming "more than they that watch for the morning."

THE HYMN.

Who is this so weak and helpless,
Child of lowly Hebrew maid,
Rudely in a stable sheltered,
Coldly in a stable laid?
'Tis the Lord of all creation,
Who this wondrous path hath trod;
He is God from everlasting,
And to everlasting God.
Who is this—a Man of Sorrows,
Walking sadly life's hard way,
Homeless, weary, sighing, weeping
Over sin and Satan's sway?
'Tis our God, our glorious Saviour,
Who above the starry sky
Now prepares the many mansions
Where no tear can dim the eye.

Who is this—behold Him raining
Drops of blood upon the ground?

Who is this—despised, rejected,
Mocked, insulted, beaten, bound?

'Tis our God, Who gifts and graces
On His Church now poureth down;
Who shall smite in holy vengeance
All His foes beneath His throne.

Who is this that hangeth dying,
With the thieves on either side;
Nails His hands and feet are tearing,
And the spear hath pierced His side?

'Tis the Lord, Who ever liveth
'Mid the shining ones on high,
In the glorious golden city,
Reigning everlastingly.

BP. WALSHAM HOW.



Thursday before Easter.

THE WASHING OF THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

"Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?"—*S. John* xiii. 6.

Thou desirest, my soul, to be present in thought where in the upper chamber the Master eats the passover with His disciples. It is furnished and prepared. Seek that thy heart may be furnished likewise

with the gifts of His Holy Spirit, that so thou mayest be able to entertain Him. The paschal lamb lies before them; all things are ready for the feast. So too, as S. John tells us, are all things ready for the offering up of the true Paschal Victim. Judas sits near, grasping the price of His life. The priests and elders have arranged their plan; the servants and the soldiers have received their orders; the false witnesses have been provided: all things are prepared for Christ's apprehension, mock trial, and judicial murder. And all this Christ knows. The hour of His departure "out of this world unto the Father" has come at last; and S. John, who saw Him on that ever-memorable evening, paints Him to us as it found Him, not anxious for Himself but for others, and showing by His tender care for us how, "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Look then, O my soul, at this great sight; behold how "conscious of deity within," "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God, He riseth from supper," that by His action He may teach thee great things.

First, He lays aside His upper garment. Even thus, O everlasting Word! didst Thou empty Thyself of Thy rightful majesty and dignity, when Thou "becamest poor, that we through Thy poverty might be rich."

Next, as an attendant slave might do, He takes a towel and girds Himself for service. So, even so, my Saviour, didst Thou "take upon Thee the form

of a servant" and submit to be "made in the likeness of men;" for us men and for our salvation consenting to appear on earth "in the likeness of sinful flesh."

"After that, He poureth water into a bason." Even so to-morrow will Thy precious Blood flow as that water is flowing now. And then He begins to wash His own disciples' feet. Ah! Lord, is it not enough, yea too much, that Thou must once pour forth that crimson tide? must Thou also Thyself separately apply its pardoning efficacy to each sinner that believes in Thee? I start back with S. Peter: "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" Thou, so high, kneel before Thine unworthy servant? Thou, so holy, touch what sin has so defiled? Thou, so divine, serve me in so mean an office? Yet I dare not say (as he said who knew not then, but afterwards, what his Lord's act meant) "Thou shalt never wash my feet;" for I have heard my Master's words to S. Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in Me."

Lord, if this faithful disciple of Thine needed Thy cleansing, how much more do I? If he who, having received the great Pardon, only required now forgiveness for sins of infirmity, was so addressed by Thee, what cause have not I, after all my sins and failures in Thy service, to say with him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head," imploring the fresh application of Thy pardoning love? If Thou wash me not, how can I be fit to claim a part in Thee in Thy most holy feast? "Purge me" then "with hyssop and I shall be clean:

wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." O joy! He Who loved me and gave Himself for me grants my petition. "I will," He says; "be thou clean." I fall down and adore "Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood." But while I am trying to offer Him my praises, His voice again meets mine ear. What saith my Lord to His servant? This: "Know ye what I have done to you. Ye call me master and lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your lord and master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." Ah! who is sufficient for these things? What unselfish kindness, what forbearance with the evil, what goodness to the unpleasing, what willingness to stoop low for my brother's profit, to deny myself what I naturally like for his advantage, are here demanded of me?

How have I responded to this most touching appeal? This night is the night of the New Commandment. Now it is that our Lord not only bids us love one another, as God's people were of old charged to do; but, opening up a new world by the saying, to love one another as He has loved us.

O Christ, Who hast loved me so dearly, forgive my coldness and ingratitude to Thee; shown, as in other ways, so especially by the want of a loving spirit towards my brethren. Christ, Who didst not give up even Judas without anguish and effort, forgive my want of hopeful endeavour to reclaim the evil. Christ, Who didst pray for Thy murderers,

pardon my slowness to forgive. Christ, Who "in all our afflictions wast afflicted," forgive my want of sympathy with others in their joys and sorrows. Christ, Who hast shown the reality of Thy love to me, not merely by kind words of pity, but by Thine own life laid down, pardon my few deeds of love, my unreadiness to make personal sacrifices for the good of others. O fill me with Thy Spirit, pour Thy grace into my heart; and grant me now, though late, to fulfil Thy great Commandment, and, for Thy dear sake, to love others "with a pure heart," fervently.

THE HYMN.

Jesus! exalted far on high!
To Whom a Name is given,
A Name surpassing every name
That's named in earth or heaven;
Before Whose throne shall every knee
Bow down with one accord;
Before Whose throne shall every tongue
Confess that Thou art Lord;
Jesus! Who in the form of God
Didst equal honour claim;
Yet, to redeem our guilty souls
Didst stoop to death and shame;—
Oh! may that mind be formed in us
Which shone so bright in Thee;
May we be humble, lowly, meek,
From pride and envy free:

May we to others stoop, and learn
To emulate Thy love;
So shall we bear Thine image here,
And share Thy throne above.

First Hymn Book of S.P.C.K. 303.



Thursday Evening.

THE HYMN OF THE LAST SUPPER.

“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”—*St. Mark xiv. 26.*

This hymn was formed of the three Psalms appointed in our Psalter for the 24th morning of the month, and was always sung at the conclusion of the Paschal feast. The disciples, as they joined in this part of the accustomed ritual, may have felt cheered by its hopeful words amid their gloom and despondency. Could they have borne to sing them if they had clearly seen all that was coming? If they had, would not one or another of them have exclaimed: “Not these Psalms to-night. Rather those which speak of ‘coming into deep waters,’ which complain of the treachery of friends, which tell of desertion and anguish, and speak of a ‘life drawing nigh unto the grave,’ of sinking into ‘the lowest pit.’” And in truth to mere human reason, the words chanted by the eleven and their Master sound

strangely at variance with actual fact. "Thou hast delivered my soul from death," they sing, just as Christ's human soul is about to become "exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" "mine eyes from tears,"—when Gethsemane is about to witness the "strong crying and tears" which have made this night for ever memorable; "and my feet from falling," at the moment when, betrayed into the hands of his enemies, their Lord is going to suffer death instead of "walking before God in the land of the living." "This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it," resounds from their lips,—when in truth it "is a day of trouble, rebuke and blasphemy" and the hour of "the power of darkness." "The Lord hath not given me over unto death," they intone with one accord; yet in a few hours their Leader will be heard to cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me."

So might "the wisdom of this world" reason. Not so the eternal Wisdom, the Word made flesh. These contrasts perplex not Christ! for He knows that they are not real, only apparent. He knows that the Paschal Hymn speaks the truth and that its promise shall be fulfilled on the morning of gladness, and therefore He does not refuse to sing it in the dark night of adversity. He knows that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints;" and, if so, how precious beyond all words the Death of Him Who is the very Holy One of God. He knows that, though not before, but after tasting death, His soul shall be delivered from it; and that on the third day

from this sad evening His walk before God in the true land of the living will have begun. "I shall not die (so as to remain under the dominion of death) but live and declare the works of the Lord," He therefore sings in the assured confidence of a perfect faith; seeing His foes that are encompassing Him, about to be cast down by the rebuke of God, and knowing that, having the Lord on His side, He need not fear what man can do to Him. In joyful anticipation of His glorious Resurrection He sings, "The Lord is my strength and my song and is become my salvation;" and adds, as He looks onward to His Ascension, "He hath not given Me over unto death, open to Me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord." O glorious spectacle of His triumphant faith, Who is Himself the Author and Finisher of faith in us! Look well at it, O my soul, ere thou follow Him in spirit to the dark shades of the garden where His conflict for thy salvation is to begin. And pray that thou, too, through union with Him, mayest be enabled when the time of thine own death shall draw near to go forward with hope and joy, well assured that the final issue shall not be death but life.

The token and pledge of this stands full in view in this hallowed supper-chamber which the sacred guests are about to quit. It is the Cup of salvation which the Master has lately consecrated with the words, "This cup is the new (covenant) in My Blood." For as Moses inaugurated the first cove-

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nant, with the words, as he sprinkled the victims' blood upon the people, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you," even so has my Lord appointed this Cup as the sign of how the New Covenant was made by means of His own most precious Blood, and as the pledge that I shall receive its benefits. Those benefits we invoke in our Ante-Communion Service, when we ask for pardon for the past and power to keep God's Law in the future; remembering the covenant-promise, "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Those benefits are sealed and pledged to us in the act of communicating; for it is because He, Who "is not a God of the dead but of the living," then says to us that He is our God, that we know that He will preserve our souls and bodies unto everlasting life.

O Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, Who, since "without shedding of blood there was no remission" for us, didst not refuse to shed Thine own to win for us these unspeakable gifts, grant me a grateful heart with which to receive them, and an assured faith in them now and always: so that, as Thou, confident in Thy heavenly Father, didst sing Thy song of victory before the battle began, I, Thy feeble and unworthy soldier, may yet enter on my last conflict with the full assurance that Thou wilt make me more than conqueror, and may say as I see death approaching, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. Return unto thy

rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

THE HYMN.

Sion's daughter, weep no more,
Though thy troubled heart be sore ;
He of Whom the Psalmist sung,
He Who woke the Prophet's tongue,
Christ, the Mediator blest,
Brings thee everlasting rest.

In a garden man became
Heir of sin, and death, and shame ;
Jesus in a garden wins
Life, and pardon for our sins ;
Through His hour of agony
Praying in Gethsemane.

There for us He intercedes ;
There with God the Father pleads ;
Willing there for us to drain
To the dregs the cup of pain,
That in everlasting day
He may wipe our tears away.

Therefore to His Name be given
Glory both in earth and heaven ;
To the Father and the Son,
And the Spirit, Three in One,
Honour, praise, and glory be
Now and through eternity.

Translated by BAKER. *Hymns Ancient and Modern.* 100.

Good Friday.**FIRST MEDITATION. CHRIST'S DEATH.**

"Who, His own self, bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."—1 *S. Peter* ii. 24.

Thou standest face to face at last, O my soul! with the sight for which thou hast been long endeavouring to prepare,—the sight of Christ crucified. Lift up thine eyes and look. "Messiah is being cut off, not for Himself," but for thy transgressions; bearing thy sins, bruised for thy iniquities. He has no sins of His own for which to suffer. Spotless from the first beginning of His mortal existence, whereas thou wast conceived and born in sin, He has been like thee tempted, but, unlike thee, He has never fallen. Behold what the absolutely pure, the altogether Holy One, is suffering for Thy sake. Of Him the Apostle who knew Him so well bears witness that He, and He only of all the children of men, "did no sin;" yet see what He is enduring. He, Who was fitly represented in the sacrifices of the Law by the dove with no soil on its silver wings, by the lamb without spot or blemish, hangs now on that accursed tree bearing thy sin "His own self in His own body" there. "Ah! say not mine; say instead, the sins of the whole world. These indeed is He there bearing that, by death, He may take them away. Mine I know are there among the rest; but they are a few amid that vast number." Is such

thy thought, O my soul? Art thou disposed to lose thyself in a crowd of sinners more or less guilty than thou, and refuse to see Christ's eye fixed on thine individual self, and so forget that He is loving thee, and giving Himself for thee? Nay, but, if so thou thinkest, answer this one question: Suppose that thou and thou only hadst sinned and all other men been righteous, could Christ have opened to thee the kingdom of heaven at a less price than this which He is now paying? would that cross of shame not have been laid upon His shoulder? could He have sanctified thee without suffering in this place outside the gate, where He is now shedding "the blood of sprinkling" for thee? Must not this cross, which first He bore so patiently, have afterwards borne Him just as it is now doing, if thou wert not to remain outside the gate of the heavenly Jerusalem, an outcast for ever? "Cursed is every one," we read, "that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Thou ownest that not such has been thine own obedience. Well then, could Christ have "redeemed thee from the curse of the law," supposing thou alone hadst broken it, by suffering a less penalty than that which thou here seest Him endure of "being made a curse for thee"? Thou art constrained to answer, "No." Then look on Him as pierced by thyself as much as if no other's hand had wounded Him. Understand that, just as the sun must rise as he does now and pour forth all his wealth of radiance on the world, supposing that thou wast its only

inhabitant, or else thou must be left in darkness, even so, hadst thou been the only sinner, Christ must suffer all these things or thou remain for ever far from God: as with the sunlight so with the death of Christ; each is enough for millions, but yet not too much for one. Behold then the Lamb of God to-day bearing thy sin. See what wounds it has inflicted upon Him, see how He is shedding His precious blood for thee,—and then remember that what thou seest is but little. There is a deeper anguish in that holy Sufferer's mind; that sacred Heart is breaking beneath an unutterable burden of woe; the travail of thy Redeemer's soul as He stands before God bearing thy sin is what thou in thy selfishness and earthliness canst not discern. Ah! canst thou even dare to look at what He suffers within thy sight? How shalt thou dare raise thine eyes to the holy Feet which ever "went about doing good," pierced with sharp nails by thy transgressions? the Hands which, gently laid upon them, opened the eyes of the blind and healed the sick, now torn by thy misdoings? the Face more marred than any man's? the royal Head crowned so ill by the thorns which thy sin has planted? How much less canst thou search out the sorrows of His wounded spirit? Rather fall down before Him and say, Lord, by these Thy grievous sufferings, known and unknown to me, I implore Thee, give me grace to mourn for my sins which wounded Thee, and to hate and crucify them for Thy sake.

But consider besides, O my soul, the vastness of

the Love here revealed to thee. Those Hands are willingly stretched out that they may win the power to heal thy spiritual diseases; unwounded, they could cure the sick and blind, or multiply bread for the hungry, but, before they can give thee sight, or break the bread of life for thine hunger, they must be rent with those sharp nails. Oh, how God must love thee, if when He Who is infinitely wise could find no other remedy for thy hurt, He consented to this one! Say to thy Saviour, Ah! Lord, my creation cost Thee nothing. "The heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them," and Thou didst feel no weariness. But labour even to a sweat of blood, but weariness even to that languor of death which is now stealing over Thine exhausted frame, were needful before Thou couldst say of Thy work of redemption, as Thou now art saying, "It is finished." In that first creation by which man became a living soul Thou didst speak and it was done, breathedst life into him and he lived. But to new-create my soul to holiness I see Thee here, with a loud cry of anguish, breathing forth Thine own sacred Spirit upon a sea of blood.

O my Lord! that dying cry of Thine seems to shake both heaven and earth. The sun has long been dark; and now the temple-veil is rending, the rocks are shivering, the earth quaking, and the graves opening. Shall my heart prove closer shut than those graves, harder than those rocks? Shall it defeat the purpose of Thy death, Who hast died that I "being dead unto sin might live unto righteousness." No. Lord, I implore Thee by Thy Cross,

Thy Passion and Thy most precious Death, bring
 death to my sins and life to my soul. Thou hast
 died for me: make me able to live unto Thee.

THE HYMN.

For Thou didst die for me, O Son of God!
 By Thee the throbbing flesh of man was worn,
 Thy naked feet the thorns of sorrow trod,
 And tempests beat Thy houseless head forlorn;
 Thou, with the Father One,
 E'er time his flight begun,
 Before the ages were, the Eternal, Eldest-Born!
 Thy birthright in the world was pain and grief,
 Thy love's return ingratitude and hate;
 The limbs Thou healedst brought Thee no relief,
 The eyes Thou openedst calmly viewed Thy fate;
 Thou Who wast wont to dwell
 In peace, tongue cannot tell
 Nor heart conceive the bliss of Thy celestial state.
 Thou wast alone in that fierce multitude
 When "Crucify Him" yelled the general shout,
 No hand to guard Thee 'mid those insults rude,
 No lip to bless in all that frantic rout;
 Whose lightest whispered word
 The Seraphim had heard
 And adamantine arms from all the heavens broke
 out.
 They dragged Thee to the Roman's solemn hall
 Where the proud judge in purple splendour sate;

Thou stoodst alone, a patient criminal
Thy doom of death from human lips to wait,
Whose throne shall be the world
In final ruin hurled,
With all mankind to hear their everlasting fate.

They bound Thy temples with the twisted thorn
Thy bruised feet went languid on with pain ;
Thy blood, from all Thy flesh with scourges torn,
Deepened Thy robe of mockery's crimson grain,
Whose native vesture bright
Was th' unapproachèd light,
The sandal of Whose foot the rapid hurricane.

They smote Thy cheek with many a ruthless palm,
With the cold spear Thy quivering side they pierced;
A draught of bitterest gall was all the balm
They gave to enhance Thine unslaked burning
thirst ;
Thou at Whose words of peace
Did pain and anguish cease,
And the long-buried dead their bonds of slumber
burst.

Low bowed Thy head convulsed, and drooped in
death,
Thy voice sent forth a sad and wailing cry,
Slow struggled from Thy breast the parting breath,
And every limb was wrung with agony ;
That head, whose veilless blaze
Filled angels with amaze,
When at that voice sprang forth the rolling suns
on high.

And Thou wast laid within the narrow tomb,
 Thy clay-cold limbs with shrouding grave-clothes
 wound,
 The sealèd stone confirmed Thy mortal doom
 While watchmen walked Thy desert burial-ground;
 Whom heaven cannot contain,
 Nor the illimitable plain
 Of vast infinity enclose or circle round.

For us, for us, Thou didst endure the pain,
 For us Thy spirit bowed itself to shame,
 To wash our souls from sin's infecting stain,
 To avert The Father's wrathful vengeance-flame,
 Thou, Who couldst nothing win
 By saving worlds from sin,
 Nor ought of glory add to Thy all-glorious name.

MILMAN, *Martyr of Antioch.*



Good Friday. (Evening.)

SECOND MEDITATION. CHRIST'S BURIAL.

"He gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took Him down and wrapped Him in the linen."—*S. Mark* xv. 45, 46.

Stand as near as thou canst to the Cross,
 Christian soul, while these last sad offices are being
 performed; for this death concerns thee very closely.

What has bidden those holy Feet cease from

their errands of kindness? What has made those Hands droop, powerless to save? What but thy sin? It is thine own work that thou beholdest; look at it and say what thou thinkest of it. Those Ears were ever open to the prayer of the poor destitute, ever listening for the cry of the humble repentant sinner. But now kneel down, if thou wilt, and try to pour into them the sad tale of thy sin and sorrow; and although a few hours ago they would have hearkened to it, they cannot do so now. Oh, what hast thou done? Whom hast thou killed? Whose Head hast thou brought down to the dust of death? Those Lips never before kept silence, when the glory of God or the good of men called them to speak. Fearless in loving reproof, overflowing with divine instruction, even Christ's enemies bore witness that they spake as never man's spake. How did the good confession which came from them this very morning amaze Pilate! What a sermon the mourners who followed along the road of sorrows heard from them! how did their precious promise to the penitent robber make death welcome to him! A few short hours ago they were making "intercession for the transgressors," speaking to God for men and to men for God. But they are mute and cold now; they have no answer for thy entreaties. They will not absolve thee on thy confession, or give consolation to thine anguish; they are the lips of the dead.

And is this thy work? art thou indeed guilty of this death? a murderer? and of such a Victim?

Alas! yes. He Who lies before thee pierced with so many wounds would have had "a long life, yea even for ever and ever," had it not been for thee and such as thou. It is His disinterested love for thee that has brought Him to this. Thy Surety lies here, paying for the things which He never took; "cut off out of the land of the living" through thy transgression. While those good men and weeping women are shrouding the sacred limbs, ere yet they cover the face with the white linen cloth, kneel down to own the grievous wrong which thou hast done to thy best Friend, and say:

"Forgive me, O Thou essential Truth! that have so often mocked Thee by breaking my solemn vows and promises to Thee.

"Forgive me, O true Patience! that have so often pierced Thee by repeating my offences.

"Forgive me, O Everlasting Life! that have so often crucified and slain Thee by preferring to Thee some sin which Thou knowest to be worthy of death for a murderer.

"Forgive me all that my sins, nay all that I, have done to Thee in Thy bitter passion; and give me all that Thou hast purchased by Thy bitter passion.

"Forgive me and all them that, like them for whom Thou madest request unto Thy Father in the midst of Thine anguish, have done to Thee we know not what, and give us that which we cannot yet conceive¹."

¹ Austin's Meditations.

Soul! to whom makest thou this petition? I make it to One Who can hear me even now and answer me, though how I cannot explain. To One Whose human spirit is "free among the dead," and Whose presence is at this very moment lighting up their dark dwelling-place. To One Whose glorious Godhead has neither deserted the living spirit which for a brief time is absent from its fleshly mansion; nay, nor this ruined temple which my guilt has shattered.

I wait its rebuilding on the third day, and I hope then for an answer of peace, for is it not written in the Prophets, "After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight"?

THE HYMN.

It is finished! Blessed Jesus,
Thou hast breathed Thy latest sigh,
Teaching us, the sons of Adam,
How the Son of God can die.

Lifeless lies the broken Body,
Hidden in its rocky bed,
Laid aside like folded garment:
Where is now the Spirit fled?

In the gloomy realms of darkness
Shines a light unknown before,
For the Lord of dead and living
Enters at the open door.

See! He comes, a willing Victim,
Unresisting hither led ;
Passing from the Cross of sorrow
To the mansions of the dead.

Lo! the heavenly light around Him
As He draws His people near ;
All amazed they stand rejoicing
At the gracious words they hear.

For Himself proclaims the story
Of His own Incarnate Life,
And the death He died to save us,
Victor in that awful strife.

Patriarch and Priest and Prophet
Gather round Him as He stands ;
In adoring faith and gladness,
Hearing of the pierced Hands.

There in lowliest joy and wonder
Stands the robber at His side,
Reaping now the blessed promise
Spoken by the Crucified.

Jesus, Lord of dead and living,
Let Thy mercy rest on me ;
Grant me too, when life is finished,
Rest in Paradise with Thee.

BP. MACLAGAN. *Hymns Ancient and Modern.* 122.



Easter Eve.**CHRIST'S GRAVE.**

"If we have been planted with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."—*Rom. vi. 5.*

"Let my beloved come into his garden," says the spouse in the Canticles: human nature addressing her heavenly bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. But alas for earth's gardens! Pleasant places though they be, yet the sin which began in a garden spoils and defaces even them. And so it comes to pass that while the Gospels show me my Saviour twice over in a garden, in the first I find Him in His Agony, and in the second in His Grave. Terrible was His conflict, but great His victory, in Gethsemane; and now He is resting after His labours. Palms ready to be the tokens of His triumph lift their lofty heads, sweet flowers offer their scents for His refreshment; the birds are singing round His resting-place; but the Victor lies sleeping the deep sleep of death. Sweet spices breathe their fragrance through the rock-hewn chamber where, wrapped in white linen, lies the Man Who, like other men, went "forth to His work and to His labour until the evening;" but Who, unlike all other men, finished faultlessly the work appointed for Him, and Who now, as do other weary toilers, takes His rest in a tomb. Oh how different is this garden from that other one in which Thou, O Eternal Word, Whose

delight was ever with the children of men, didst hold converse with Adam, "walking in the garden in the cool of the day;" for death had not then entered into that garden, whereas this was planted by Joseph of Arimathea round a sepulchre. In that garden Thou didst reveal Thyself to Adam on the first sabbath, resting from Thy work of creation; in this garden Thou art resting, O Incarnate Lord, from Thy work of redemption. Thou didst not need that first rest; for "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." But this sabbath is needed by that manhood whereby Thou hast wrought out our new creation. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God;" and of that rest Thou art now partaking for their sake. We who watch outside Thy tomb rejoice that Thou hast found rest at last; but grieve with shame and self-reproach to think that Thy barque, tossed by the tempest which our sins have raised, could find no haven from them but the grave. O blessed Son of Man, Thou hadst not where to lay Thy head safe from the pursuit of Thine enemies, till Thou didst lay it in the dust of death; and our transgressions are the cause. Not till the deep sleep of death closed Thine eyes and dismissed Thy spirit to the paradise of God, did the wicked cease from troubling Thee and Thy weariness find rest. May we not as we deplore our wrongful dealing towards Thee, and feel glad at Thine entrance into peace, forget all else this evening to think of Thee and of Thee only? "Not so," a voice seems to say. "Rather,

remembering that Christ has entered paradise to take possession of it for you, see that you do not disappoint Him of His reward in your salvation. 'Fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, you should seem to come short of it.' To do so is treason to the buried Jesus." Say quickly then, my soul answers, what I must do. O long ago baptized into the death of Christ, ask thyself seriously what thou knowest of burial with Him? Art thou seeking to lay thy sins in His grave, only so far as their power to condemn thee goes, but not unwilling meantime that they should live and bear rule within thy heart? Know that the fulfilment of such a wish is impossible, and that to entertain it is the basest ingratitude to thy crucified Saviour. It is only "if we are planted with Him in the likeness of His death, that we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." Pray then for power to bear that likeness by a true death to sin. Seek thus to be indeed a plant in this garden of death, wherein even now is stirring the quickening might whereby from death comes life. Only "he that is dead is freed (justified) from sin." Die then to sin with the Master Who died for thy sin; seek thus effectually to be "made conformable to His death," and truly buried with Him. So shalt thou rest even now in Him; so shall thy flesh one day "rest in hope," with flowers of faith and love blooming round it, as His does at this moment in that rock-hewn vault, well assured that when the Morning Star shines, when the "day breaks and the shadows

flee away" to return no more, whosoever has been thus sown in Christ's garden shall hear the cry, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs. Thy dead men shall live: together with my dead body shall they arise." Then shall their own blessed experience teach them what it is to be planted in Christ's resurrection.

THE HYMN.

Father and Lord of our whole life,—
As Thine our burden and our strife,
As Thine it was to die and rise,
So Thine the grave and paradise.

Lord of the eternal Sabbath day,
Lo, at Thy tomb for rest we pray:
Here rest from our own work; and there,
The perfect rest with Thee to share.

True God, true Flesh of Mary made,
In a true grave for sinners laid,
With Thee this mortal frame we trust:
O guard and glorify our dust!

Soul of the Lord so freely breathed,
And to the Father's hands bequeathed,
Draw us with hearts' desire to Thee,
When we among the dead are free.

Dread Preacher, Who to fathers old
Didst wonders in the gloom unfold;
Thy perfect creed O may we learn
In Eden, waiting Thy return.

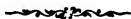
They saw Thy day, and heard Thy voice,
And in Thy glory did rejoice;
And Thou didst break their prison-bars,
And lead them high above the stars.

"Captivity led captive" then
Was sung by angels and by men;
Grant us the same to sing by faith,
Both now, and at the hour of death.

Our souls and bodies, Lord, receive
To Thine own blessed Easter Eve:
All our beloved in mercy keep,
As one by one they fall asleep.

To Thee Who dead again dost live
All glory, Lord, Thy people give,
With the dread Father as is meet,
And the eternal Paraclete.

KEBLE. *Salisbury Hymn-Book.* 92.



Easter Day.

FIRST MEDITATION. CHRIST VICTORIOUS.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: behold thy King
cometh unto thee."—*Zech.* ix. 9.

Who is this that cometh, whom we go forth to meet
this morning with joyful hymns of praise? for whom

our churches are decked with flowers, and at whose approach our hearts beat with awe and gladness? Who is this that cometh from the dark Edom of the grave, the light on whose majestic brow proclaims Him the Vanquisher of Hades? This that cometh with dyed garments from the Bozrah of conflict with the powers of evil, bearing the marks of no bloodless victory, the scars of many wounds; but now truly "glorious in His apparel," for His robe is the uncreated light of eternity,—“travelling in the greatness of His strength,” for His mighty hand has broken in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron which enclosed Death’s gloomy city; so that now “the treasures of its darkness and the hidden riches of its secret places” belong to this great Conqueror, and He can do with them as He pleases? This is He Who three short days ago bled and suffered, was mocked and rejected. How has His weakness become strength, His shame glory, and His sorrow joy! “Behold the Man,” said Pilate; and the thoughtless multitude despised and disowned Him. But God says to-day, “Behold the Man by Whom has come the resurrection of the dead; and by Whose obedience shall many be made righteous.” “Behold your King,” said Pilate, as he pointed to a thorn-crowned Head. But to-day God crowns that self-same Head with glory and honour; saying, not to men only but to angels, “Behold your King, Whom I have set on My holy hill of Zion.”

Who is this that cometh to us after descending so low and rising up so high? after treading “the

winepress alone" in anguish unutterable, and after having received a fulness of joy which no heart of man can conceive? "I, thy Lord," is the answer; "'I that speak in righteousness mighty to save;' for I am raised for the justification of all that believe in Me, and 'I am able to save them to the uttermost, seeing that I ever live to make intercession for them.'"

Let the daughter of Zion then rejoice greatly on this happy morning. Let the daughter of Jerusalem (God's holy Church throughout all the world) shout with exultant gladness; for behold her King cometh unto her, "just,"—for He is "the Lord our righteousness,"—and "having salvation;" yet "lowly," since by no tokens of pomp and royal majesty does He reveal Himself to her, but by words uttered by the lips of humble men, through bread broken in remembrance of "Jesus that was crucified," through wine which makes the faithful to be partakers of that "blood of the covenant which sends forth the prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." "Through this blood of the everlasting covenant, the God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep." Through it He offers me pardon, holiness, and life. By it He bids me draw near to Him this morning. By it, if only I repent of the sins which shed it, honestly intending to forsake them and to give myself afresh to Him Who died and rose again for me, I "have boldness to enter into the holiest" place to-day. The veil which hung before it and

forbade the sinner's access was rent by my Saviour's dying cry, and He has consecrated for me through His flesh "a new and living way." I do not approach alone. There is a Hand, once wounded but now all-powerful, that leads me; a Mediator Whose intercession cannot be rejected that presents me. I have "an high priest over the house of God," Who, like Melchizedek a king also, "abideth a priest continually;" for though He would not be a priest if He had not died once, He can now "die no more, and over Him death can never more have dominion;" therefore is His priesthood unchangeable. When He lifts up His holy Hands as my Advocate with the Father, in them are seen the tokens of His acceptable sacrifice and of His glorious victory; and whosoever is by those Hands presented is by God accepted. Therefore let me draw near this morning, "with a true heart in full assurance of faith," to that "Father of mercies and God of all consolation" "Who raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory;" saying with all my heart and mind, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."



RHYTHMIC PRAYER TO CHRIST RISEN.

FIRST PART¹.

"And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him."—*S. Matt.* xxviii. 9.

Hail! thrice hail! Thou risen Saviour,
From death's gloom to man restored.
Hail! our Morning-Star resplendent,
By God's armies bright adored.
We, through Thee alive, beholding
Own Thee Life, and Light, and Lord.

Bands of death asunder riven,
Laid aside the winding-sheet,
Thou, with gracious salutation,
Speedest now Thy friends to greet:
Let me kneel with them in worship,
Clasp with them Thy holy Feet:—

Feet which trode alone the wine-press
While the blood Thy vesture stained,
Coming now o'er Bozrah's mountains
Here to give what there was gained;—
While to own us for Thy brethren
Lord, Thy lips have not disdained.

Feet, to men salvation bringing,
Not its tidings as of old,
When the herald's feet seemed beauteous
For the peace of which he told;

¹ This Hymn was suggested by S. Bernard's *Oratio Rhythmica ad Christum a Cruce Pendentem*.

But its very self in substance
 Here for grateful hands to hold.

Feet, that mighty in their weakness
 Trampled down the Lion fell,
 Bruised the Serpent's head envenomed,
 Crushed the raging host of hell :
 Feet whose scars to men and angels
 What that conquest cost Thee tell.

Feet by many a sharp thorn wounded
 While the Shepherd sought the sheep ;
 Bruised by flints while Thou, great Sower,
 Precious seed didst bear and weep :
 Thou Who wilt return, the harvest
 Sown in tears with joy to reap.

By the memory of the sorrows
 Suffered on Thy blood-stained way,
 By Thy many toilsome footsteps
 Taken seeking me astray,
 Gather me for life, I pray Thee,
 In Thy sheaves on that great Day.

'Neath Thy holy Feet the branches
 Of vain thoughts and joys I fling ;
 Let them lie there, Lord, and wither.
 For Thy service there I bring
 Of my soul the fleshly garment,
 Gladly offered to my King.

Give me strength to mark Thy foot-prints,
 Following duteous where they go,

Both in doing and in suffering
 Treading in Thy steps below,
 Till within Thy palace-portal
 I shall rest from toil and woe.

Let me there, my journey ended,
 Falling low Thy throne before,
 See all things Thy Feet put under ;
 Thee, my Guide, my Help, adore,
 And with Angels and Archangels
 Give Thee praise for evermore.

Easter Day.

SECOND MEDITATION. THE OPEN GRAVE.

"She stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."—*S. John* xx. 11, 12.

To-day—but with what changed feelings!—I go back to the garden which contains the holy Sepulchre. I think of the faithful Mary who, having watched her dying Lord so steadfastly and hastened so early to His tomb, announced with tears to two Apostles that she had found it empty. I confess with shame that my love for Him has not been constant like hers ; that I am not worthy to see the sights that she beheld. Still, let me stoop down as she did in the quiet morning hour and look with her into the sepulchre. A radiant glory streams from its dark recesses ; for there sit "two angels in white," appearing in their festal array to

"keep the feast" with men on earth. Never were such visitants seen in a tomb before; for those unfallen spirits have no concern with the sad consequences of our sin, they turn aside with horror from death, the penalty of our disobedience. They dwell in a land where no enemy ever comes and whence no friend ever departs; what, might one well ask, can persuade them to visit a place so alien to their nature as a grave? But the question is easily answered. This grave they visit is the grave of Jesus, of their Lord and ours. "Seen of angels" and adored in His helpless infancy, seen, and owned by them as their King, in His conflicts with Satan,—the Saviour's tomb, leaving which was His final triumph, is a sacred spot to the hosts of heaven. Other burial-places may bear witness to them of man's sin, but this one tells them of the new Man's obedience; others proclaim Satan's malignity and success, but this declares his defeat. Therefore the angels enter this vault, and gladly dispel its lingering gloom by the light which they shake from their wings; so that Christ's people may know that over their graves too will these glorious servants of their great Master keep faithful watch, till the earth shall shake for the last time, when the trumpet calls them to leave them. The angels sit there calmly in meditative repose; not hovering above, poised in mid air, not standing as though on a transient visit; but resting as if attracted by some sight well worth their diligent investigation. And this sight, what is it? What

fixes those eyes of fire, which see so quickly through all earth's vain shows, in that steadfast adoring gaze? They are the wonders of redeeming love that they are contemplating; "which things," says one, himself an early visitor of this sepulchre, "the angels desire to look into." Through many ages, from the first moment of their being, they have been used to see grand displays of God's power and wisdom; they have witnessed proof after proof of His goodness. But His free kindness to the undeserving, His mercy to the miserable, His pitying love to sinners, could not be seen till there was guilt to need them. So that it is in God's mercy that these glorious beings take new lessons; it is the wondrous humiliation of His Son in order to save sinners, that reveals to them new unsuspected depths of the divine loving-kindness. "Behold how He loved him," said the Jews, when they saw Jesus weeping over the grave of Lazarus: "Behold how He loved them!" may the angels have exclaimed, as, sitting in His tomb, they reflected how He shed for us not merely His tears but His blood; how He not only wept over our graves, but laid Himself down in one of them to ransom us from the dominion of death. We seem to hear the seraph who sits "at the head where the body of Jesus had lain," exclaiming, "It is a royal Head that rested here, even His Who is King of kings and Lord of lords, His 'Who is the head of all principality and power,' 'the image of the invisible God,' 'by whom and for whom all things were created.' To

that Head belong of right the many crowns of the universe: oh, then, how inexpressible is the love that consented to its being wreathed with thorns, and laid here in the dust of death, in order to save sinners!" "Here," his companion-angel seems to answer, "were laid, weary, worn, and bleeding, from their search for the lost, those Feet under which the Father has decreed to place all things in subjection: how must the Good Shepherd have pitied the wanderers before He resolved to tread that road of blood and tears for their recovery!"

Such are the thoughts of the angels of God in the holy sepulchre. What are thine, O my soul? They admire a charity which has been bestowed on others. Thou thyself art its object; what dost thou think of it? Christ "took not hold of angels" for redemption, but of Adam's children; and was "made a little lower than the angels that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man," and therefore for thee also. And now that, risen from the dead, He is "crowned with glory and honour," "He is not ashamed to call them brethren" whose nature He has taken; He is still mindful of thee and of those like thee. "Go tell My brethren," He says to Mary Magdalene; as though the dearer His love cost Him, the stronger it grew, and the more He had suffered for us, the more He loved us. The angels stoop down with adoration to behold the kindness which Christ is showing thee: how dost thou regard it? How I ought to regard it Mary's example tells me. I should give

the whole for the whole : this poor unworthy heart, for the noble Heart that was pierced for me by the spear and by love. So does she. She weeps bitterly for her absent Lord ; and for His absence nothing can console her. The angels kindly ask her the reason of her sorrow ; but neither surprise, nor admiration caused by this beautiful vision, can dry her tears. They still flow on, as she says, "They have taken away my Lord out of the sepulchre, and I know not where they have laid Him." As the Psalmist said of old, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee," even so Mary says to Christ. Neither man, nor angel, can make her happy so long as she has lost her Lord. But, alas! I am not like Mary. Much of my life I have been content without Christ's presence. He has offered to me a love that angels might envy (could such thoughts disturb those serene and loving spirits); and I have too often received the offer with coldness and indifference. But am I at last mourning over my ungrateful neglect of it? Do I now at least long to have Christ with me, and stand weeping, with Mary, beside His empty tomb? If so, such is my risen Saviour's love, that even now He is ready to ask me kindly, "Why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" O everlasting Spirit! renew and change my heart, till from its inmost depths it can give the answer, "Thee, Lord; and Thee only."

RHYTHMIC PRAYER TO CHRIST RISEN.

SECOND PART.

"Then came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."—*S. John* xx. 19, 20.

Risen Lord! with joy we hail Thee,
 King of righteousness and peace!
 Once Thy word assuaged the tempest;
 Now it bids our terrors cease,
 After all our tears and sadness
 Bringing tidings of release.

We had shut our doors and barred them,
 Gathered here a trembling band;
 Now, with awful joy and wonder,
 In our midst we see Thee stand,
 Hear Thy voice say, "Peace be to you,"
 See Thee raise each piercèd Hand.

Thou hast said: in love adoring
 We Thy dear-bought gift receive;
 Scarcely credence yield for gladness,
 Yet at Thy great word believe
 That our night of tears is ended,
 That our Sun shines forth at eve.

Therefore, reverent eyes uplifting,
 We with awe Thy wounds behold;
 See those Hands whose touch dim blindness,
 Wasting sickness, cured of old,

Now, to heal more dread diseases,
 Nail-prints to our sight unfold :
 Hands that fed, unscarred, the thousands ;
 But to win us living Bread,
 Food that lasts to life eternal,
 On the Cross in anguish bled :
 There through all the long day, pleading
 With our sinful hearts, outspread :

Hands, whereby our debt was cancelled,
 Nailed unto the Tree of shame ;
 Hands whereon deep Love has graven
 Of Thy people each dear name ;
 Hands whose very touch can kindle
 Faith's faint spark to living flame ;

Hands now Mercy's sceptre wielding,
 Raised Love's tokens to reveal.—
 Let me reach my hand, though sinful,
 To that Hand stretched out to heal,
 Which, for my offence delivered,
 Risen doth my pardon seal.

To my touch no longer faithless
 But believing, now disclose
 Of Thy grace the Rock once smitten,
 Whence the stream for ever flows ;
 Cleansed by blood, not water only,
 Bid me on Thy Love repose.

Lord and God! henceforth uphold me
 Travelling on earth's thorny ways,

By Thy loving Arms surround me,
 By Thy Mercy crown my days,
 Till at last to Thy dear presence
 Me that piercèd Hand shall raise;
 There to give Thee thanks, great Shepherd!
 From the dead brought back once more;
 Thanks to Him Who gave Thee glory
 Which all thrones bow down before;
 There, with Both, of Both the Spirit
 Through all ages to adore.



Easter Monday.

THE CALL OF THE RISEN SAVIOUR.

“Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”—*Cant.* ii. 10.

It is the voice, O Christian soul, of Him Whom
 thou oughtest to love above all things. When He
 calls His Church “My love,” He is speaking to the
 company, concerning whom the Apostle testifies
 that “Christ loved the Church and gave Himself
 for it.” When He says “My fair one,” He speaks
 to that body which He “loved foul in order to
 make fair;” for whom He suffered “that He might
 sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water
 by the word, that He might present it to Himself a
 glorious Church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any
 such thing, but holy and without blemish” like its

divine Head. And addressing the many as one, He here speaks to His loved spouse in a parable taken from the spring. "Lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone:" I have scattered the dark storm-clouds of sin, and shine forth as the Sun of righteousness. Had I not died for thee, how couldst thou hope for pardon and help to do better? Had I not risen again, where would be thy assurance of My power to give them to thee? But now that I have been "delivered for thine offences, and raised again for thy justification," why shouldst thou doubt either that I am willing or that I am able to bestow them? "Believe this," is the call to the whole Church and to each of its members, "and it shall be spring-time in thy soul, flowers of love and holiness shall bloom there, thy heart shall sing for joy seeing what great things I have done for thee; for now in the brightness of My rising 'the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.'" Let the soul answer, "Lord, all Thy commands are promises: whatsoever Thou enjoimest give me grace to fulfil. I believe; help Thou mine unbelief. Quicken my deadness, and cause me to be filled with all those fruits of righteousness, which are through Thee to the glory and praise of God."

It concerns thee nearly, Christian soul, to give such answer to Him Who now comes into that garden which He has purchased with His own blood. For the renewing to which He calls thee,

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is that first putting forth of "the power of His resurrection" upon thee ; which, if only thou now yieldest thyself to it, shall work in thee with ever-growing intensity. His holy Paul sought to know it more and more in his own experience, that so "by any means he might attain unto the resurrection from amongst the dead" in glory. Yet, it is but a little time, and the hour will come when those dove-like souls that now hide "in the clefts of the Rock" of ages, will hear one more storm rage, see the snows of the last fierce tempest drive past their shelter, and then rejoice in the coming of the everlasting spring. "Surely He comes quickly" at Whose presence His precious flowers will unfold in radiant beauty and in never-withering bloom from out of their dark resting-places beneath the ground. They will rise and expand in their splendour, while His angels sing around them ; and it will be Christ's voice that will have wakened them from their slumber ; the Bridegroom's second call, "Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away."

Make sure then, O soul, that thou canst say, "My beloved is mine and I am His." That He is thine by His own gracious will and intention, the nail-prints in those Feet, at which the holy women kneel near the garden of His sepulchre, assure thee ; for, for thee He bore them. But canst thou say, "I am His : His to go or stay, work or suffer, as He shall bid me ; His to trust and cling to Him ; His to love and serve faithfully ; His, not my own any more, for, if through His death I live,

then I must not live unto myself but unto Him that died for me and rose again"? Ask Him to make thee able to say this in sincerity, and then thou mayest rest securely in His love "until the day break and the shadows flee away." O day which will be clear and bright past our present power to conceive! Day that will amaze the children of God by the sight of undreamt-of perils that they have escaped, and un hoped-for deliverances that they have obtained—even as the children of Israel marvelled of old on that morning when they looked out on the Red Sea's waters and saw not an enemy left to harm them. Day in which thou, with all the ransomed of the Lord, shalt sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb," crying out with joy unspeakable, "The Lord is my strength and my song, and is become my salvation. . . . Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed" by Thine own Blood. "Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation: the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established;" and we shall go no more out.



THE VOICE OF JESUS.

"It is the voice of my beloved."—*Cant.* ii. 8.

"The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live."—*S. John* v. 25.

"My sheep hear My voice."—*S. John* x. 27.

Jesus! Shepherd kind and loving,
 Lest we wander from Thy fold,
 Doubt reproving, fear removing,
 Call us as of old :
 Lead us going on before,
 Let us hear Thy Voice once more ;
 All our hearts' affections claim
 Calling each one by his name.

When that Voice (like waters meeting
 In Thine angels' ears on high)
 Here, repeating love's own greeting,
 Calls us tenderly,
 Earthquake, wind, and raging fire,
 Vanquished from the strife retire ;
 Weak to bind man's stubborn will
 Like those accents small and still.

For that Voice it was which found us
 Laid in darkness 'mid the dead,
 Foes around us, grave-clothes bound us,
 Light and life had fled ;
 But He spake and loosed death's chain,
 And we heard, and lived again ;
 Leaden sleep released our eyes
 When that Voice proclaimed, "Arise!"

Should our eyes be dimmed with sorrow,
 Blinded by too many tears,
 From that morrow light to borrow
 Where Christ Risen appears,
 Even as mourned the Magdalene
 Christ for dead, though living seen,—
 Call us by our names ; then known
 Thee dear “ Master ” we shall own.

With us in our need abiding,
 Make our hearts within us burn,
 Gently chiding, kindly guiding,
 Bid us truth discern ;
 Teach us how death life precedes,
 How Thy Cross to glory leads :
 Thenceforth with us to the end
 Ever stay our pitying Friend.

Then, within the Rock’s cleft creeping,
 Bid us hide from death’s cold blast,
 In Thy keeping safely sleeping
 Till the Night be past ;
 For Thy Voice when Day shall break
 Once again shall cry “ Awake ! ”
 Rise, come forth, beloved ! and see
 How the shadows haste to flee.

Rise ! for winter rains are over,
 Storms have fled no more to come ;
 Where boughs cover song-birds hover,—
 Now my flowers can bloom ;

From their graves how fair they spring,
 Angels o'er them carolling
 Joyous welcome to the Day,—
 "Fair one! rise and come away."



Easter Tuesday.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION THE SOURCE OF THE CHRISTIAN'S COURAGE.

"Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified."—*S. Matt.* xxviii. 5.

"Fear not!" seems the Christian's Easter watchword. The pious women come trembling in the early morning to the sepulchre, an earthquake affrights the soldiers on guard there, an angel with countenance like lightning rolls back the stone from the door, and sitting on it scares away presumptuous intruders; but when he sees his great Master's humble friends, the faithful women who had watched by His Cross and wept beside His Tomb, he addresses them at once with "Fear not." If this same mighty angel is to preside over the general resurrection at the Last Day, each soul may well enquire, Is it thus he will speak to me then? When Christ yielded up the ghost "the earth did quake and the rocks rent;" when He took again that life which He had laid down for us, "behold there was a great earthquake." "But now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And

this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." The first earthquakes assure to us the certainty of that last one. S. Paul told the Athenians that God "hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Now, "When that 'first day of the everlasting week' shall have come," the soul should ask, "Shall I be left trembling and comfortless like the keepers who 'did shake and became as dead men'? or will the angel's voice say to me 'Fear not,' and encourage me, like the good women, to 'lift up my head, because my redemption draweth nigh'?" Will not the answer to this question be found by considering the rest of that angel's words? When he told the faithful Maries that, though others had cause to fear they had none, he added the reason, "For I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified." Now let each one ask himself, Do I seek Jesus? Do I seek in Him One to save me from my own evil desires and habits and bring me nigh to God? Am I grieved at His absence? do I rejoice at His presence? Do I seek Him with tears of penitence if I have fallen away from and lost Him? Is His Cross all my trust? and do I strive to nail to it my love of sin? If so, and if I continue so doing to the end, need I doubt that His angel will say to me in the great Day, "Fear

not"? Nay! does not Christ Himself say to me already, "Be not afraid"? When, many years after His Resurrection, He appeared to His beloved disciple on the lonely isle of Patmos, when the man who of old had laid his head in familiar confidence on his Master's bosom, "fell at His feet as dead" overcome by the brightness of His "countenance which was as the sun shineth in his strength," I read how the Lord strengthened him to behold this great sight. S. John says, "He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." If, like this holy Apostle, I "have known and believed the love that God hath to us," dim as my knowledge, weak as my faith in it, may be, ought I not to know that even to me, His weakest and unworthiest, Christ also says, "Fear not"? For what are the grounds of those encouraging words? Not anything special in S. John. If they had been, then this great saying would not apply to me. But these words rest on what Christ is in Himself; and therefore they can give me strong hope and everlasting consolation. They depend upon His Godhead: He is "the First and the Last;" and if so, the weakest believer need fear nothing. O trembling soul! He who has promised to save thee is Almighty. He says, "I am He that Liveth:" in Him as God is that "well of life" whence all existence flows; in Him as God and

Man united dwells that quickening power which gives life to the dead. He "was dead;" behold His great desire to help Thee: He is "alive for evermore;" see His boundless power to save. He "was dead:" then He can pity, knowing by His own experience what pain and trouble are. He is "alive for evermore," so that no sorrow which He pities can be beyond His reach to comfort. He "was dead," and by His death He has made "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction" for thy sins: He is "alive for evermore" to show that that sacrifice has been accepted, and to present it continually to the Father on thy behalf. And in that once wounded Hand of His are "the keys of death and Hades," the power to appoint the hour of each man's death, and to bring back to life each when He shall see good. Where, had God allowed us to choose, would we sooner see those keys than in that mighty and most merciful Hand? Christ knows by His own experience how the dying feel. He passed through the dark valley alone, and He well knows how to guide His people safely through it. Nay! often do they traverse it scarcely noticing its gloom; for their eyes are fixed on Him "Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light." Look at an example of this in S. Paul. He is in a dungeon, outside of which the headsman's sword awaits him. But he is writing words of cheerful encouragement to one more timid, although less in danger, than himself. And what is his charm against fear?

This: "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel. . . . If we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him. If we suffer we shall also reign with Him. . . . The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom."

Of a truth then it is our Master's resurrection which says to all His servants when they "are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not:" so that the man who, oppressed by the thought of death, cried out, "They have cut off my life in the dungeon and cast a stone upon me," can exclaim, "Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: Thou saidst, Fear not. O Lord, Thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul, Thou hast redeemed my life." "Thanks be to God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."



RHYTHMIC PRAYER TO CHRIST RISEN. THIRD PART.

"And His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—*Rev. i. 16, 18.*

Hail, high Lord! the First-begotten
From the dead to endless days!
Our true Life and Resurrection!
Now Thy ransomed people raise

Unto Thee, for death abolished,
Hymns of joy and ceaseless praise.

Hail, great Sun ! that hosts of darkness
Vainly strove to dim and blight :
Thou art risen clear and righteous,
Shining with unchangeable light ;
Marching conquering and to conquer,
Scattering all the powers of night.

Angels view Thy risen glory,
Bowing down in reverent guise
At Thy Head's refulgent splendour ;
They who sat with downcast eyes
Where that Head was laid, and pondered
O'er its place with sad surprise.

How then can I dare gaze upward
On that Head which crowns adorn ?
I who know that my transgression
Yielded it to pain and scorn,
Wove Thy brow a mournful garland
Of the twisted, piercing thorn !

Smitten by the awful brightness
Of Thy Face, as dead I fall ;
Speechless while that Face majestic
Marred by me my thoughts recall,
That high Head to dust degraded
And by me to death made thrall.

But Thine Hand to calm and strengthen
Rests on me for whom it bled ;

And Thy lips move hope-inspiring—
 Lips that "It is finished" said,
 Ere upon Thy Cross of anguish
 Thou in death didst bow Thy Head.

"Fear not, I am He that liveth,"
 Say they, "I who died before;—
 Since I live shalt thou live also,—
 And I live for evermore,
 Holding fast the keys which open
 Hades' and death's iron door."

Lord of both the dead and living,
 Who didst die and rise again
 Over both to win dominion,
 In Thy service true retain
 Me through life; and in my dying
 Let me Thine for aye remain.

Grant me when death's awful slumber
 Weighs mine eyes, to wake with Thee
 By my mighty Head yet quickened,
 Though among the dead, still free;
 Sight of nothing else desiring,
 There Thy Face beloved to see.

Grant me, when the dead and living
 Stand before Thy Judgment-Seat,
 Then to see Thy Face with gladness,
 Praise Thee, falling at Thy Feet,
 One in glory with the Father,
 And with Him, the Paraclete.

Easter Wednesday.**CHRIST'S RESURRECTION THE CONSOLATION OF
THE PENITENT.**

"Tell His disciples and Peter."—*S. Mark xvi. 7.*

The women who "came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun" on Easter-Day, found that a greater Sun had already risen. They who had been anxiously enquiring who should "roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre" for them, found to their comfort "that the stone was rolled away" by a mightier hand than man's; even as that morning's blessed work had rolled away the stone of guilt and sin and death which had seemed to shut mankind hopelessly into a sepulchre from which there was no escaping; at which stone the wisest and strongest of men had been wont before to look, and to despair of seeing it lifted, "for it was very great¹." The "young man sitting on the right side of the sepulchre, clothed in a long white garment," told Salome and her friends the joyful news that their sweet spices were not needed; that they might indeed "behold the place where" their dead Master had been laid, but that He Himself was risen. And after they had looked at it, this holy angel sent them forth to carry the glad tidings to the Apostles; naming expressly that one of their number who, having fallen into the grievous sin of denying Christ, was now mourning in bitterness of

¹ See Sermons by Archdeacon Hare.

spirit over his transgression: "Go your way, tell His disciples *and Peter* that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you." It is S. Peter's own scholar, S. Mark, who has recorded this message of the forgiving Saviour; which doubtless raised His fallen servant from the depths of despondency, and which he must have ever after treasured in grateful remembrance. For S. Peter was assured by it that his sin, though great, was not too great to be forgiven; nay more, that his Lord not only pardoned, but still numbered him among His disciples. And the risen Saviour was not content with merely sending him this kind message. He did yet a greater thing; for, it would seem that, even before He was seen by the "beloved disciple," "Christ was seen of Cephas." We have no particulars of the interview, to which S. Paul refers thus briefly in his enumeration of the witnesses to the Resurrection, and of which Cleophas and his friend, on returning from Emmaus, were informed by the exultant cry in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, "The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon;" but those who know the most of penitential sorrow for sin, and of a Saviour's pardoning love, will be best able to imagine for themselves its tenderness and its tearful gladness. Look then, O my soul, at this wondrous picture. Behold thy risen Lord, not hastening to confound His enemies, but to comfort one repentant heart; not going forth in His majesty to vindicate His own honour but in His love and pity to bind up a

broken spirit¹; and say if He Who is raised from the dead is not "this same Jesus" Whose steps, seeking the lost among the Galilean hills, thou hast often tracked with reverence and delight? Is not the same mind in this "great Shepherd of the sheep" now, that there was before He was "brought again from the dead?" It is not that He loves S. Peter better than S. John, the penitent better than the saint; but He goes first to him who most needs His care, and rejoices when He finds that which was lost. It is an exhibition of the same principle when, late in the evening of Easter-Day, we find Him charging the Apostles to call sinners to share His pardoning love, bidding them preach "repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;" so that even those who shed His precious blood may, if they will, be cleansed by it; and provision is made to give the offer of forgiveness first to those who, having committed the worst of sins, stand most in need of it.

O my Lord, this sight of Thy mercy, in its freedom and boundlessness, should melt my heart to a deeper and more thorough repentance. Keep me from resembling in any measure those of whom Thou saidst that they would not be persuaded to repent "though one rose from the dead." Let Thy risen greatness on the one hand, Thine abiding compassion on the other, move me. Did the heathen

¹ See Bradley's Sermons.

men of Nineveh repent when a prophet, coming forth on the third day from his living grave, warned them of approaching judgment? and shall I, when the great Prophet shows me "the sign of Jonas" by rising again from "the heart of the earth," refuse to give heed to His testimony? Nay rather, as Thou Lord Who didst call sinners of old to repent art now exalted to "give repentance," I implore Thee earnestly for that precious gift. I grieve too little for my sinfulness; I am weak and wavering in carrying out my resolutions of amendment. By the power of Thy resurrection arm me "with the same mind" that was in Thee, which resolves rather to suffer than to sin. Reveal Thyself to me as unto S. Thomas, saying, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hand, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not" impenitent but penitent. This ought I to desire alike for my Saviour's honour and for my own good. For if I never sow with Him in tears, how can I expect to share in His joyful reaping? If I mourn not for the sins which pierced Him, how can I think to be comforted by Him? They to whom He said "All hail" on Easter morning had been weeping for His death. It was Mary Magdalene's deep sadness that attracted Christ when He came to turn her sorrow into joy. It was the profound dejection of S. Peter which brought the great Consoler to his side. Let me seek to share the heaviness of Christ's disciples; for it can only "endure for a night,"—long as that night may seem,—and "joy cometh in

the morning." And then their "hearts rejoice with a joy that no man taketh from them," because having wept for the sins which hid Christ from them, their eyes see Him again.

But let me remember that the penitence to which my Master calls me is not a mere sentiment, but a principle of action. When S. Peter sank before Him beside the Lake of Galilee, and faltered forth his tearful answers to Christ's thrice-repeated "Lovest thou me," Jesus summoned him to prove his sincerity by acting and by suffering. Lord enable me, like him, to feel how much Thou hast forgiven me, and, in return, to love Thee much; and strengthen me, like him, to "follow Thy steps" in doing God's will and in patiently enduring grief at His bidding, that so I may show that I love Thee not merely "in word neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

SONNET.

When earth grows dark around thee—not with night,
But woe for sin—lift up, though sorrow-bowed,
Thy head and look; farther is grief allowed
To see than joy, as eye in dark than light.

The desert-wandering host while day glowed bright
Scarce marked their guide, a shadowy shape of
cloud;

When night flung sable veil the sky to shroud
It shone a pillar of fire, constraining sight.
And Mary's eyes were dim with many a tear
When first they saw the angels, then her Lord.

L

To Emmaus once, mourning their Master dead,
 Two sadly walked, beset with doubt and fear,
 When He, the Stranger, came, made plain His word;
 Then stood revealed at last, the living Bread.



Easter Thursday.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION A SUMMONS TO SEEK THE
 THINGS THAT ARE ABOVE.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"—*S. Luke*
 xxiv. 5.

These words, addressed by the angels of the sepulchre to the women by whom they "stood in shining garments," seem spoken to myself. For is not "seeking the living among the dead" the very thing that I have been doing all my life, and seem inclined to go on still doing? What do I seek for? Ease, rest, comfort, enjoyment, happiness. And where? (must I not own it?) In this world. And, if so, am I not seeking the living among the dead? for can I gain these blessings in their completeness from earthly things, in all which sin has mixed trouble, and into all which it has brought dissolution? Am I wise then if I go on seeking happiness in a direction where I shall never find what I want in perfection; and where my imperfect gains can never be a lasting possession? Men of old, who had no assurance of any life but the present one, diligently made the most of this one and looked no

farther. But I ought to know better than they did. Christ is "the first-fruits of them that slept;" and I expect to be one in the great harvest which is to follow. He is "the first-born from the dead;" the first Who "being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him;" but He abides evermore in His spiritual body in incorruption, in glory, and in power. He is "the first-born among many brethren;" and He has promised us, whom He is not ashamed to honour with that great title, that He will "change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." How kindly has He pledged to us this great promise, assuring us that "if it were not so He would have told us," and saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also!" When I drew near to His Holy Table on Easter-Day, and there beheld the tokens of His victory over death, did not my Lord pledge His word to me that He would "raise me up at the last day" by the power of His life-giving Body, and through the Blood of the everlasting covenant? And did not my heart then answer thankfully, "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord?" Did not my spirit exult in the hope of my forming one in that great procession, foreseen by the prophet when he cried, "The Breaker is come up before them; they have broken up and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it; and their king shall pass before them,

and the Lord on the head of them?" the happy company of those who, going after Him Who broke open for them the gate of death, shall hear Him say in their name at the entrance into heaven: "Open me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them and I will praise the Lord: this is the gate of the Lord into which the righteous shall enter!" If so, what manner of person ought I to be in daily life? One whose affections are set on things below, who minds earthly things? Nay, surely: I at least have no excuse if I seek the living among the dead. Or should I be a sullen despiser of God's good temporal gifts, the least of which is far above my deservings? Not so: rather a thankful receiver of them for the use for which they were intended, as provisions and refreshments by the way, while I keep my journey's end steadily in view. But I must pray for grace to set my affections on the things which, unseen now, will so soon replace these visible and temporal things amid which my present path lies.

And what are these unseen eternal things by which I ought to direct my course? Surely Christ Himself; and those things which He bids me seek after. The sense of God's presence and favour, delight in His service, brotherly love, purity, truth, —these, and such as these, are eternal; begun here, they will endure and grow on for ever in the great hereafter. As I gain these I shall be able to make a right use of earthly good things; and, while not depending upon them for my happiness, still get

more comfort and pleasure from them as my Father's gifts to me, than I could do while I set my heart on them instead of upon Him.

Eternal Father, Who hast "raised up the Lord Jesus," and hast promised to "raise up us also by Jesus," give me now the "earnest of the Spirit" that I may seek Thy glorious kingdom. Lord and Saviour, Who art the Resurrection and the Life, make me to have my true life hid in Thee; showing itself by heavenly-mindedness, and by diligence in preparing for that day when Thou Who art my life shalt appear. O Holy Ghost, the Life-Giver, breathe upon my soul, slain by sin, that it may live; that so I may be found at the last in the ranks of the great army of those who have risen with Christ, whom God shall one day "place in their own land,"—that land where "they shall possess the double," even "perfect consummation of bliss both in body and soul."

THE HYMN.

For all Thy love and goodness so bountiful and free,
 Thy Name, Lord, be adored!
 On the wings of joyous praise our hearts soar up to
 Thee:

Glory to the Lord!

The springtime breaks all round about, waking
 from winter's night,
 The sunshine, like God's love, pours down in floods
 of golden light:

Glory to the Lord!

A voice of joy is in all the earth, a voice is in all
the air;
All nature singeth aloud to God; there is gladness
everywhere:

Glory to the Lord!

The flowers are strewn in field and copse, on the
hill and on the plain,
The soft air stirs in the tender leaves that clothe
the trees again:

Glory to the Lord!

The works of Thy hands are very fair; and for all
Thy bounteous love

Thy Name, Lord, be adored!

But what, if this world is so fair, is the Better Land
above?

Glory to the Lord!

Oh, to awake from death's short sleep, like the
flowers from their wintry grave,
And to rise all glorious in the day when Christ shall
come to save!

Glory to the Lord!

Oh, to dwell in that happy land, where the heart
cannot choose but sing,

Thy Name, Lord, be adored!

And where the life of the blessed ones is a beautiful
endless spring:

Glory to the Lord!

F. DOUGLAS and BP. WALSHAM HOW,
Church Hymns, S.P.C.K. 61.

Easter Friday.

THE CROSS IN THE LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION.

“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?”—*S. Luke xxiv. 26.*

We are not suffered to forget the Cross in the joy of Easter; behind its rainbow lights is ever visible the black cloud which forms their background. The gladness of Easter morning begins in a garden; but in that garden there is a sepulchre: its good news is proclaimed by angels, but while they publish it they speak of “Jesus, which was crucified.” In the afternoon of Easter-Day we find our Lord walking, still unknown, beside two disciples, listening to their perplexities and with infinite condescension opening to them the scriptures for their removal; but, as He does so, His chief theme is His own passion. They had thought of a Messiah who should reign but not suffer; He points out to them how, had He been such, the types of the law and the words of the prophets would alike have remained unfulfilled, since both unite in demanding the Cross. And when at last their eyes are opened, and they see Who has been discoursing with them, it is by the symbols of His death that Christ reveals Himself to them; being “known of them in breaking of bread.” The same great truths are declared to the assembled apostles by the same great Expounder, the passion still

holding a prominent place among them: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer." And, accordingly, our Lord retains the marks of that suffering on His risen and glorious Body. When He is suddenly revealed to the Ten, standing in the midst of them on the evening of Easter-Day, the pledges of the "Peace" He bestows on them are the prints of the nails in His Hands, the spear-wound in His Side. The touch which on the following Sunday removes all the doubts of S. Thomas, is a touch which certifies to a death endured as well as to a life regained.

And therefore in the Sermons of the Apostles from the Day of Pentecost onwards, in their Epistles and other writings, and in the Creeds of the Church, the Cross and the Resurrection are, as reason demands, indissolubly connected: to preach the one is to preach the other. Kneeling in the shadow of the Cross, the Church during Holy Week, as her Palm-Sunday Collect bears witness, looks forward to the coming light of Christ's Rising again. In Easter-Week the process is reversed. The Church rests in the brightness of the Risen Glory, but it is the Cross to which she from thence looks back, and whereof she sings "with Angels and Archangels" in her Easter chant of praise. O then, Christian soul! "remember and forget not," amid thy present gladness, the vast price at which it was purchased for thee. Thou hast been called to "keep the Feast" of feasts, the highest festival of the year; but remember that in it thou feedest on "Christ

our Passover, sacrificed for us," and mingle with thy joy the bitter herbs of sadness for the pain which thy sin caused Him; testifying thy gratitude for His sufferings by diligently putting "the leaven of malice and wickedness" away from thy heart. Thou art rejoicing in thy deliverance from the Egypt of sin; bear in mind that thou wast redeemed from that degrading slavery, not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;" and let that solemn recollection move thee to strive to profit by the freedom which He won for thee so hardly. Hear His Apostle, who paid so dearly for his own unwatchfulness after the last passover, exhorting thee to secure the fruit of its antitype. "Gird up," says he, "the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ . . . Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." (1 S. Peter i. 13, 17.) "Watch unto prayer," lest thy Saviour lose in thee the fruit of His passion. See that thou cause Him to remember no more its anguish for joy in the life that it has given thee. Ever recollect with shame that, as the same S. Peter told the Jews when he preached to them in Solomon's porch, thou hast "killed the Prince of life" by thy sins; and strive to add with him, "Whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" who live to God through Him. Reckon thyself henceforward as "dead indeed unto sin," and daily entreat thy

Saviour to make His heavenly life "manifest in thy mortal flesh." That Hand which S. Thomas touched is held out to thee, with its token of a love which has proved stronger than death. Never rest till thou canst say with the great preacher of the Cross: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

THE HYMN.

At the Lamb's high feast we sing,
Praise to our victorious King,
Who hath washed us in the tide
Flowing from His pierced Side;
Praise we Him, whose love divine
Gives His sacred blood for wine,
Gives His body for the feast,
Christ the victim, Christ the priest.

Where the paschal blood is poured
Death's dark angel sheathes his sword;
Israel's hosts triumphant go
Through the wave that drowns the foe.
Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed,
Paschal victim, paschal bread;
With sincerity and love
Eat we manna from above.

Mighty victor from the sky,
Hell's fierce powers beneath Thee lie;
Thou hast conquered in the fight,
Thou hast brought us life and light;

Now no more can death appal,
 Now no more the grave enthal;
 Thou hast opened paradise,
 And in Thee Thy saints shall rise.

Easter triumph, Easter joy,
 Sin alone can this destroy;
 From sin's power do Thou set free
 Souls new-born, O Lord, in Thee.
 Hymns of glory and of praise,
 Risen Lord, to Thee we raise;
 Holy Father, praise to Thee,
 With the Spirit, ever be.

From the Latin. R. CAMPBELL.
Church Hymns, S.P.C.K. 128.



Easter Saturday.

EASTER THOUGHTS ON THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED¹.

"If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—*1 Thess.* iv. 14.

The Son of God has consecrated our mortal life in all its stages by passing through them; and, even so, He has hallowed our death by partaking of it. That holy body of His which sanctified the waters of Jordan to the mystical washing away of sin, has in like manner sanctified the waters of

¹ Some thoughts in this Meditation are derived from Stanhope, Adams, and Melville.

death to His people; that in them, by the final abolition of the body of sin, the promise of their baptism may find its complete accomplishment. His spirit departing from His body has opened paradise for their souls' entrance, so soon as they are parted from their flesh; and His body, by resting for a brief while in the dust of the earth has consecrated it to be a safe resting-place for those bodies which are to be fashioned at the Last Day like itself. Because they are members of a Risen Head, we know that the dust of the saints is treasured up for a glorious restoration; their sepulchres, like their Master's, are in a garden now, the flowers in which bloom as emblems of the hidden life yet to be revealed there, while the Cross rises above them to tell whence the hope to which they bear witness springs.

And if it is thus with man's meaner part, how is it with his nobler? Christ, Who to this end both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord "both of the dead and living," has by His Death and Resurrection shed a clear and steadfast light on the condition of those spirits who, freed from the burden of the flesh, are now safe under His faithful watch and ward. I know that we who live this earthly life as yet can but dimly apprehend the nature of that better Eden to which Christ's word bade "the dying felon by His side" look forward. All our words about it tend to become too material. Yet provided we remember that human language can but deal with it in figures,

there is no harm in speaking of the condition of departed saints so far as Scripture gives us warrant, as a rest after toil, an enjoyment of serene and perfect light after the mists and storms of earth, as a walking with God Himself amidst the trees of the garden, a worshipping Him in His true sanctuary and in His own immediate presence.

Let me, then, place myself in thought among "the spirits of just men made perfect;" some of whom I knew and honoured while they were yet with us. They have reached the true manhood of the soul; what I thought their great attainments in wisdom and holiness seem to them now but childish things; for, no longer catching broken reflections of God's goodness from a dim mirror, they see Him "face to face." True theirs is contemplation not action as yet; but they look forward while "absent from the body" to resuming it ere long, and with it their active service of God on a vaster scale, in a nobler sphere, under far more favourable conditions than on earth; and for those higher ministries they are now ripening in the Light that bathes them, being "present with the Lord." The rest into which they have entered from labours, conflicts, and sorrows is indeed sweet to them, since it is a rest with and in Christ, for Whom they laboured and fought. Having "departed to be with Christ," He is Himself their immediate teacher; and that is why, knowing as they are known, they are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment." Mys-

teries which perplexed them once are now clear to them: things which when seen from below of old divided them, now lie plain and smooth beneath their feet. Christ, the minister of the true sanctuary, treats them no longer as babes, but as men of full stature; and not by imperfect channels as on earth, but by manifestation of truths made by clear communication of mind to mind, instructs these His favoured disciples. O divine preacher! O blessed congregation! Seek, my soul, so to use the word and sacraments now, that thou mayest one day be admitted to it! And as they hear, they pray; saying their Lord's prayer for their struggling brethren on earth, and one clause of it, "Thy kingdom come," for themselves also; longing for their own perfect consummation of bliss at the coming of Christ in His glory. O that I could enter into that prayer's meaning as they do! Lord, so teach me to pray here, that presently I may be able to join in the Litany of Thy Church Expectant!

But do those blest spirits especially think of, and pray for, individual friends? Our Lord has told us in His parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, of a dead man's anxiety about his five brethren. Yet *he* was evil. Can we then think that our pious departed parents and relatives never take thought for us? that they offer no earnest prayers to their Saviour and ours for our perseverance in the right way? Rather, being sure that they do, let me in my turn beseech Him that I may not disappoint

their desire, and make vain their petitions for me.

And one more thing we may feel assured of, and that is, that the holy departed praise God as He is not praised on earth. No sin mars their sacrifice, when like pure incense their anthems rise to "Him who loved them and washed them in His own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God." He "who shutteth and no man openeth" has shut them in safely in a place where sorrow and temptation never come. He "who died for us that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with Him," is their Life in a higher degree than He is ours; and, possessed already of the best part of His redemption, they truly know that their "Redeemer liveth." How rapturously then must they thank Him! Ah! if I, who have been joining this Easter with saints on earth and with the unseen choir of angels in magnifying the "Paschal Lamb who hath taken away the sin of the world," had only had ears to hear the song of just spirits made perfect, how would my poor efforts have been put to shame! I should have heard patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, holy men, women, and children, of every people and nation, singing: "He by His dying hath destroyed death,—and so we found it, for the last enemy had no power to hurt us,—and by His rising again hath restored to us everlasting life,—so He has and so He will; for even now, though dead, yet through Him we live, and yet a little while and the trumpet shall sound and we

shall be raised, the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Grant, Lord, that I may one day walk before Thee with these Thy faithful in that "land of the living" where they now dwell; and that I may do so, give me grace to walk with Thee now. Make me now to know Thy voice and to follow Thee; that so, when I walk through the valley of death I may fear no evil, knowing that Thou art with me.



A SONG OF THE DYING.

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."—*Isa.* xliii. 2.

I my wearied feet have shod with sandals,
 Grasped the pilgrim-staff with aching hand;
 For the Voice has called me, and I follow
 Down to the dread strand.
 There death's billows rave,
 There await me foes;
 But before, with light to lead and save,
 Bright the Pillar goes.
 Loud I hear the cruel torrent raging,
 Waters swelling to engulph my head,
 Yet where flows that stream so chill and gloomy
 I may fearless tread;

For the Ark's pure gold
 Passes on before :
 In Its wake, despite those waters cold,
 I shall reach the shore.

I have far to go with limbs fast failing,
 Long the journey, drear the desert road,
 Stretching out between the weary pilgrim
 And the loved abode ;
 But the Bread from heaven
 Strengthens ; I, even I,
 Shall ascend the fortieth day at even
 God's own mountain high.

Oh the darkness of the glen ! the shadows,
 Formless, dim, in its recesses piled !
 Land whose light is no light, land whose order
 Is but chaos wild !
 Yet no ill I fear ;
 For, with staff and rod,
 Walks beside me One to guide and cheer,
 Saviour, Lord, and God.

Oh the fierceness of the flame, consuming
 All my flesh, yea reaching to my heart !
 While, with mighty severance rent asunder,
 Life and I must part.
 Bonds those flames may burn,
 But nought else in me ;
 Midst them I, dear Lord, Thy Form discern
 Come to set me free.

M

Murky is the narrow vaulted chamber ;
 Trembling I its broken steps descend,
 For I know within it lurks the lion,
 Waits his prey to rend ;
 But Thou, too, art here,
 Guarding me all night ;
 When day breaks with Thee shall I appear,
 Dwell with Thee in light.



THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

“The dead in Christ shall rise.—1 *Thess.* iv. 15.

On the Resurrection morning
 Soul and body meet again ;
 No more sorrow, no more weeping,
 No more pain !

Here awhile they must be parted,
 And the flesh its sabbath keep,
 Waiting in a holy stillness
 Wrapt in sleep.

For a space the tired body
 Lies with feet toward the dawn ;
 Till there breaks the last and brightest
 Easter morn.

But the soul in contemplation
 Utters earnest prayer and strong ;
 Breaking at the Resurrection
 Into song.

Soul and body reunited
 Thenceforth nothing shall divide,
 Waking up in Christ's own likeness
 Satisfied.

Oh the beauty ! oh the gladness
 Of that Resurrection day !
 Which shall not, through endless ages,
 Pass away.

On that happy Easter morning
 All the graves their dead restore,
 Father, sister, child and mother
 Meet once more.

To that brightest of all meetings
 Bring us, Jesu Christ, at last,
 To Thy Cross, through death and judgment,
 Holding fast.

S. BARING-GOULD. *Church Hymns, S.P.C.K.* 479.



The First Sunday after Easter.

THE RISEN SAVIOUR THE SOURCE OF PEACE AND LIFE.

"This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ."—1 *S. John* v. 6.

This is He Whom I have been contemplating during the past three weeks ; Whom I have once more beheld by faith in the assembly of His people this day. For, when we have by God's help shut

the doors of our hearts against vain thoughts, and have met together in dependence on Christ's promise, He does indeed come and stand in our midst as of old, and our eyes are enlightened in some degree to discern Him. "He shews us His hands and His side," and we see that He "came not by water only," not merely by a baptism like John's, to teach a pure morality and set a spotless example, for that would not have been sufficient for our great need; but by water and blood,—making atonement by His painful death for our grievous sins. This is He Who thus manifesting Himself to the believing heart, confirms to it the witness already given by the "three that bear record" to Him upon earth,—His word and His sacraments. I have received their testimony. I believe (Lord, help mine unbelief!) that "God has given unto us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son." I ought then to be glad indeed now that I see the Lord; see how willing He is to save me as I look at the marks of His passion,—how able, as I behold the tokens of His glorious resurrection. He speaks and His words fall gently on the troubled heart, Peace be unto you. And what He wishes He bestows; for as to-day's Collect reminds me, He "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification," that we through faith in His merits might have peace with God. Thrice, in this day's Gospel and Evening Lesson, I have heard my risen Lord make a gift of this peace. First to the assembled disciples that they themselves might

possess it; and then again that they might proclaim it to the world. But the third time,—as on this very evening,—to S. Thomas, the one timid disciple who could not believe till he had touched his Lord's resurrection body for himself. And even so Christ now offers it individually to me, to each single member, as well as to His whole Church. Those wounds which He bore for all, He bore for me also. He invites me to a personal application of their benefit. The atoning blood and the water of sanctification flow for me as well as for the great company of believers. With what joyful and thankful wonder then ought I to look on Him from Whom I receive these unspeakable benefits! The Israelites, when they saw how Aaron's rod had budded, marvelled at the sight of life brought miraculously out of death: how then should this nobler Life restored from the dead to quicken my soul amaze it! They wondered and praised God when they saw Aaron himself standing between the living and the dead when the plague was stayed by his prayer. With what feelings then should I behold my great High Priest, after His awful Sacrifice, now ever living to make intercession for me! "This is He that came by water and blood;" with a power to cleanse the soul which Aaron never possessed, with an offering for sin such as Aaron never offered, with an all-prevailing intercession which Aaron's uplifted censer could but typify. "This is He," gazing on whom S. Thomas became confident and courageous; and S. Peter, self-dis-

trustful. "This is He," the sight of whom turned Saul the persecutor into Paul the preacher; and gave to S. Stephen and the other martyrs the victory whereby they overcame the world.

Lord! reveal Thyself thus ever more and more in Thy transforming and victorious power to my soul. Grant that as, in these solemn days now ending, I have been permitted to be one of those

"Who both in agony
Have seen Thee and in glory; and in both
Owned Thee divine,"

so I may now find myself strengthened by that sight to "fight the good fight of faith," against the world and against my own evil heart, and to "lay hold on eternal life,"—that Life which God has given me in Thee! "This is He," who is "the first-fruits of them that slept;" who "must reign till He hath put all things under His feet," including the last enemy, Death. O Thou, the quickener of those who died in Adam, "the second man, the Lord from heaven," I too long "have borne the image of the earthy" in my thoughts and desires, I confess it. Make haste to renew my heart to Thine own likeness, until instead it at last bears "the image of the heavenly." That so, when the "voice of the archangel, the trump of God" is heard, I may wholly wear Thy likeness; and then fully know what that great gift is which Thou didst dying gain for me and dost live to bestow upon me,—even Eternal Life.

THE HYMN.

Holy Ghost, Illuminator, shed Thy beams upon
our eyes,
Help us to look up with Stephen, and to see
beyond the skies,
Where the Son of Man in glory standing is at
God's right hand,
Beckoning on His Martyr army, succouring His
faithful band ;

See Him, Who is gone before us heavenly man-
sions to prepare,
See Him, who is ever pleading for us with pre-
vailing prayer,
See Him, Who with sound of trumpet and with
His angelic train,
Summoning the world to judgment, on the clouds
will come again.

Raise us up from earth to heaven, give us wings
of faith and love,
Gales of holy aspirations wafting us to realms
above ;
That, with hearts and minds uplifted, we with
Christ our Lord may dwell,
Where He sits enthroned in glory, in His hea-
venly citadel.

So at last, when He appeareth, we from out our
graves may spring,
With our youth renewed like eagles, flocking
round our Heavenly King,
Caught up on the clouds of heaven, and may
meet Him in the air,
Rise to realms where He is reigning, and may
reign for ever there.

BISHOP WORDSWORTH.

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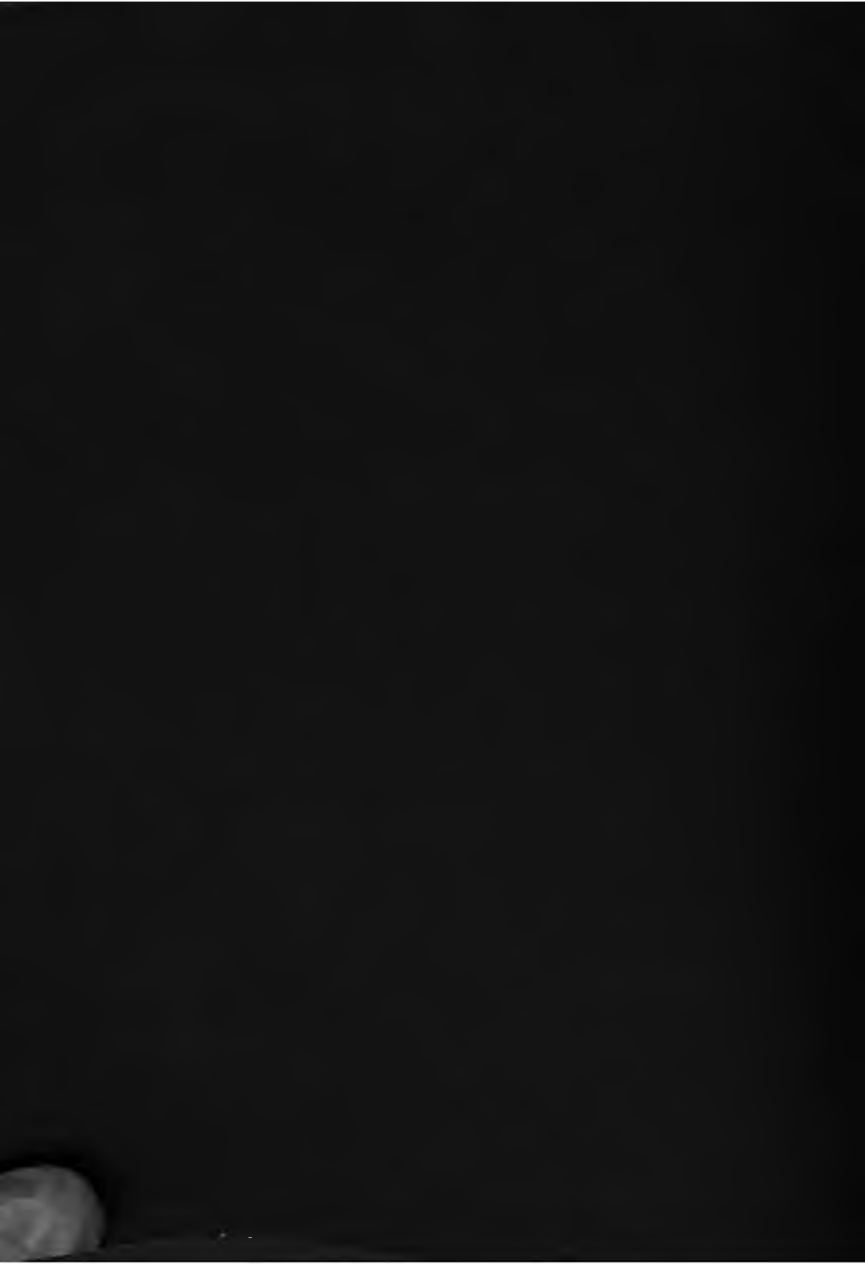
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